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**THE  
RUSSIAN BOLSHEVIK  
REVOLUTION**







Veterans of the Russian Revolution  
Tchaikovsky, Lazarev and Breshko-Breshkovskaya

# THE RUSSIAN BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION

BY

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NEW YORK  
THE CENTURY CO.

1921

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## PREFACE

This book is not written to make out a case, but to set forth what appear to be the significant facts. It is offered on the theory that intelligent people are tired of being victims of propaganda about Russia and will welcome a book that is not trying to give their minds a certain twist. I can truthfully aver that when I set pen to paper I had no rigid mental attitudes toward the phases of the Russian revolution, so that such interpretations as I venture on have come out of my study of the facts themselves.

The current notion of the second or Bolshevik revolution is that it was the work of a handful of extremists who captivated the Russian masses with their ideas. Under the pitiless pelting of facts I have been driven to the conclusion that this is untrue. As I now see it, most of the developments of the eight months between the March Revolution and the November Revolution were not caused by leaders but were inevitable, given the background of experience of the Russian common people. If the train bearing Lenin and eighteen other Bolsheviks across Germany to Russia had fallen through a bridge on its way and all had perished, events in Russia would have taken much the same course. The peasants would have seized the estates and the soldiers would have quit fighting. The robbed and oppressed masses—a hundred millions of men and women—moved toward the goal of their long unfulfilled desires like a flow

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of molten lava that no human force can dam or turn aside.

It was a majestic and appalling social phenomenon—as elemental almost as an earthquake or a tidal wave.

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Madison, Wisconsin.

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# THE RUSSIAN BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION

## CHAPTER I

### THE REVOLUTIONARY HONEYMOON

**W**HEN in March, 1917, the rotten tsardom unexpectedly fell, a wonderful spirit of brotherhood swept through all classes of Russian society. Save its paid and petted defenders no one stood up for the old régime. Only the police were willing to risk their skins for it. They, indeed, were ruthlessly dealt with, but they were usually taken fully armed while playing machine-guns from roofs and belfries upon the unarmed people in the streets. After the *rat-tat-tat* of Protopopov's machine-guns died away there were no guardians of public order except the hastily organized youthful "militia." Nevertheless, the people made it a point of honor to preserve order and for several weeks life in the large cities was almost perfectly safe.

Sympathetic association has an almost magical value. After the San Francisco fire it was remarked that families that had lost all and were camped in the parks were by no means downhearted. The secret was that the universal sympathy and helpful-



ness were meat and drink to the starved social self. The sudden fellowship that springs up in hours of disaster—like the death-watch of the *Titanic*—is found so sweet that the survivors form an association and meet annually in order to revive it. Just as the loveliest flowers grow nearest the toe of the glacier, so the sweetest intimacies spring up among those sharing the most terrible experiences. In war “comrade” becomes a sacred word, and the bonds uniting trench-mates and messmates often last through life. So comforting is this perfect fellowship that soldiers will joke and whistle amid horrors that would drive a solitary man out of his wits. The journals of Polar expeditions bear witness to the cheerfulness of the men during the long Arctic night. With companionship but without sunshine they were far happier than the mountain shepherds who have sunshine but lack companionship.

So was it for a few days following the March Revolution. There was a brief period of socialization, which, nevertheless, soon passed away because it had no solid basis. Upon realizing that at last the ancient dreadful incubus was gone, happy excited crowds rolled through the streets, every one cheering, singing, shaking hands with strangers, crying for very joy. The officers of the military missions maintained by the Allies met smiles and friendly looks whenever they showed themselves. Later they found it hard to recollect that for a brief season they basked in the sunshine of popularity.

With a solemn self-devoted look the young fellows—soldiers, students, and workingmen—dashed about in the army trucks and automobiles, fighting

the police, while with tears in their eyes the people waved and cheered and exclaimed to one another: "They are ours! Thank God, the army is with us at last!"

Never were people so obliging to one another and so kind. Any rough-looking man would step off the path into the wet snow to make room for a woman or a child.

Workingmen would say: "This is no time to be demanding higher wages. Until the new Russia is safe all the wages we will ask is enough to feed our children." In a milk shop you might find customers, rich and poor, going to the milk cans, pouring out what they needed, and leaving the right change on the counter. The spirit of helpfulness was abroad. On the street corners speakers told the people how to organize themselves. Out of students and young men of this type a police was improvised to keep order. Committees sprang up to organize the food supplies, finding where food was needed most and providing for its distribution to every part of the town. In the big apartment- or tenement-houses committees were formed and a larger committee for each block; and these committees considered the need of every family.<sup>1</sup>

The people's forces captured the prisons and the prisoners, trembling and sick-looking, were brought out. As they came out they were asked by the revolutionists, "What were you in for?" If it was a political offense they were cheered. Many shook their hands and even wept. Nothing was too good for them. If the prisoner admitted having been in-

<sup>1</sup> See Poole, *The Village*, pp. 57-59.

carcerated for a real offense, particulars were asked. In some cases they were cuffed or thrashed and warned their lives would be forfeit if they were caught again. But all were let go, and no doubt this mistaken clemency cost Russia dear.

The testimony of Mrs. Tirkova-Williams,<sup>1</sup> a Russian woman married to the well-known English newspaper correspondent, Harold Williams, is striking:

In those days good-nature and good-will were general, and created a strong, common feeling, breathing energy and force. People looked joyfully and trustfully into each other's eyes and smiled with that irrepressible happy smile which beams upon lover's faces.

We believed that Russia stood upon the threshold of a new, longed-for-life, when every one would feel himself equally free, when rights and duties would be assigned, not as a series of privileges and compulsions, but as something inherent in every individual.

It was a joy to behold how the pathos of liberty was kindled in the hearts of drab, insignificant men and women, who but yesterday felt themselves to be pariahs. On the second or third day of the Revolution a telegraph messenger brought me a telegram, and handing it to me, said: "Thank you so much."

I looked at him in surprise. A pale, tired-out, sickly, hollow-checked man stood before me. But the light in his eyes relieved the drab insignificance of his countenance.

"What for?" I asked him.

"Why, to be sure, we know about it," he said warmly, "although we are small people, and have kept to our slums afraid to move, still we knew of what others did. I have read your articles in the papers and heard your speeches at meetings. We also understand what different people

<sup>1</sup> *From Liberty to Brest Litovsk*, pp. 10-12.

stand for. Well, thank God, we've gained our liberty, you and I. It seems to me as if I were born again. What were we before now? Nothing. Worse off than dogs. Harassed by every one, not looked upon as human beings. And now my back is straightened. I seem to tread on air, my very soul seems to sing—I am a man, I am no longer a slave but a free man."

His words gushed out in torrents. The joy of liberty was bubbling in him like wine. I could not take my gaze off the eyes that sparkled with pride and joy. We both laughed with that glad laugh which means so much more than words. And the telegraph messenger hastened to tell his story in order to make me realise more vividly the importance of all that was filling his soul to overflowing:

"Here I have a wife and five children. As to myself, I am an invalid. I have consumption. You yourself know how hard my work is? Out in the street in all weathers. Our wages are beggarly—forty rubles a month. But I claim nothing, I want nothing, no increase, nothing. We'll bear it, we'll weather it somehow. If only we can hold firmly together, only not return to what was before. But we'll hold together, won't we?"

The small grey eyes shone with hope and faith. We parted like old friends with a hearty hand-shake. And often in the gloomy days of disillusion and defeat I thought of this consumptive postman, of his enthusiasm, his touching intimacy with all whom he looked upon as friends of liberty, his heroic readiness to bear any further material misfortunes if only to safeguard his rights as a man and a citizen.

His was by no means an exceptional case. Liberty had straightened out many people, had made them kinder and more sociable. All around there arose the overwhelming consciousness of proximity to and of fusion with millions of other people. Probably something of the kind is felt in moments of mass religious movements.

An official of the Kerensky Government declares:

I remember well the strange kindness and tenderness evinced by the people of Petrograd during the first weeks of the Revolution, and especially after the Czar was arrested. I saw not a sign of animosity or distrust. All were eager to show affection and faith in each other, to help each other, to coöperate for the common weal. I can never forget the young Russian student, a girl of about nineteen years of age. She was engaged to work for the Petrograd Council of Workmen and Soldiers and in distributing bread and soup to the people who crowded the palace for days and nights. I saw her one day looking with a happy smile at a soldier, who had fallen asleep while standing on guard in the palace. I greeted her. "Is it not true, comrade," she asked me, "that it is worth while to die now? People are happy and free. Oh I envy those who have fallen!"<sup>1</sup>

The spontaneous lynching of persons suspected to be guilty of anti-social offenses, was not so discordant with the general spirit of good will as one might at first suppose. It was felt that it was doubly wrong to commit crime now that the police were gone and the death penalty was abolished. Under the tsar much might be forgiven; but there should be no mercy for the man who smirched the fair fame of the Revolution. Now that brotherhood had become a reality it was felt that the man guilty of breaking the implied laws of brotherhood was not fit to live. In fact, the ecstatic fraternal mood of the liberated people recalls Wordsworth's characterization of the early days of the French Revolution:

<sup>1</sup> Zilboorg, *The Passing of the Old Order in Europe*, p. 187.

Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,  
But to be young was very Heaven!

That this blithe spirit later became overcast by  
furious contention was due, in the case of Russia  
as in the case of France, not so much to particular  
persons as to

a terrific reservoir of guilt and ignorance filled up  
from age to age

That could no longer hold its loathsome charge  
But burst and spread in deluge through the land.



## CHAPTER II

### THE BACKGROUND OF THE TOILING MASSES

NOTHING is more preposterous than to wonder why the toiling masses of Russia, standing amid their freshly broken chains, did not conduct themselves as we should do facing their problems of war and social reconstruction. When their behavior appears to us "unreasonable" or "violent," there is always at hand a stock explanation in the illiteracy figures for the Russian people. In case this does not suffice we are urged to consider the "primitiveness" of the Russian folk mind.

Now, the ignorance and want of outlook of the muzhiks must, indeed, be borne in mind in interpreting the phenomena of the Revolution. On the whole, however, the key it is necessary to apply in order to make understandable the behaviour of the Russian masses is *their background of experience*. In order to see why it is inevitable that the first gush of brotherhood should pass quickly like the morning dew, so that spring will hardly pass into summer before freed Russia becomes the theater of fierce class struggle, it is necessary to realize the lot of the toiling masses under the régime which has just collapsed over their heads. It is the bitterness of this lot that explains why they obstinately withhold their confidence from the government provided



them by the classes they look upon as their exploiters and speedily become enchanted with the slogans, "Save the Revolution!" "All power to the Soviets!" It is this that accounts for their easily aroused, and often quite groundless, fear lest, after all, their erstwhile oppressors shall contrive somehow to take their Revolution away from them. Here we come upon the secret of their intense suspiciousness and their fierceness toward any individual or group against whom the cry of "counter-revolutionary" can be raised.

#### THE PEASANT'S BACKGROUND OF EXPERIENCE

In European Russia the tillers of the soil rarely live on individual farms, but huddle in rural villages which harbor sometimes as many as ten thousand inhabitants. Entering such a village, you miss the sidewalks, trees, and spacious front yards which redeem the American country town. To prevent the spread of fire among these wooden habitations the streets are made very wide, but no highway runs down their middle and no footpaths flank them. In winter they are a deep bed of snow, in summer usually a trough of dust or mud. Trees, shrubbery, grass-plots, flower beds, find no place in the scene.

The houses are tiny huts of logs—in the treeless South of Russia they are of mud—of one or two rooms. The floor is of earth or rough boards. A table, some backless benches, perhaps a chair or two, constitute, along with the omnipresent icons, the furniture. The outstanding feature of the peasant's *izba* is a big whitewashed brick stove. The top of it offers a spacious platform on which in cold

weather the older folks sleep at night and rest by day. It is here that the children play during the long weary winter months and here is the domestic hospital to which the ailing members of the family resort. Thanks to this stove and to the wood splinters which light the hut when, as is often the case, there is no lamp, the interior is likely to be smoky. Small wonder that eye trouble and blindness are rife in these villages!

Save in the central provinces supplied with fabrics from the textile factories of the Moscow region, the clothes of the peasant are homespun from flax, hemp, or wool. Underwear there is none. Two garments, trousers and smock, constitute the man's dress in summer. In winter there is a sheepskin coat with the wool turned inside. Many a family has but one sheepskin coat, the older members wearing it by turns. When the peasant wears foot-gear at all it will be—for holiday best—the coarsest of long cowhide boots; for the rest he wears the bast shoes common among our ancestors in the Middle Ages. These are a sort of moccasin plaited from strips of bark. They suffice to protect the foot from laceration but not from cold and wet. The women knit themselves stockings, but the men, as a rule, do not wear socks. They swathe their feet in rags.

The Russian peasant is in small danger of obesity. He lives below any plane we know to have been touched by the rural population of medieval England. Perhaps we should liken his lot to that of the French peasantry at the time of the Jacqueries in the seventeenth century. To abstain from meat during

the numerous fast-days and seasons of the Russian Orthodox Church is no violent wrench to his dietary habits. "The hog or steer which the peasant raises he is likely to sell in order to obtain the money with which to pay his taxes and debts. Even the well-to-do muzhik partakes of meat only on Sundays or holidays and on other special occasions, never every day."<sup>1</sup>

As for his bread, it will be black, made from whole rye or barley—never from wheat, for his wheat he sells. White bread is an article of luxury as it was in France under the Bourbon régime. Moreover, even black bread is not consumed recklessly. For the five years immediately preceding the outbreak of the World War the average annual *per-capita* consumption of bread grains by the principal peoples was as follows:

	Hundredweight
Canadians .....	26.5
Americans .....	22.2
Danes .....	19.1
Hungarians .....	11
Belgians .....	10.8
Germans .....	10
French .....	9.6
Dutch .....	9
Rumanians .....	8.4
Russians .....	7.6

A Russian economist who was a bureau chief under the Provisional Government declares:

Taking into consideration that bread is the chief article of food of the Russian peasant, whereas in Western countries it plays a far less important part, it may fairly be asserted that *the Russian population, with its consumption of 381 kilograms per head, was chronically underfed.*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hindus, *The Russian Peasant*, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Nordman, *Peace Problems; Russian Economics*, p. 36.

Insufficient black bread, then, eked out with potatoes, mush, and cabbage soup—such is the coarse and monotonous diet of the peasants. And often millions cannot find even enough of these to hold body and soul together. Since the memorable visitation of 1891 scarcely a year has passed that there has not been famine in some part of Russia.

The wretchedness of his lot but reflects the smallness of the peasant's income. Sixty years ago, when the Russian serfs were emancipated, they received by no means the amount of land—on the whole about one half of the estates—upon which their owners had been accustomed to allow them to grow their own food. The best portions of the land they had been tilling for themselves were cut off and taken by their master for himself. Consequently most of the serfs entered upon freedom with too little land to live from and burdened with a long series of payments which should "redeem" this land, for which they were required to pay from 50 to 100 per cent. more than it was worth. Since emancipation the peasant population of European Russia has doubled, with the inevitable result of a remorseless growth of poverty and misery. The average holding per family, which was 13 acres in 1860, fell to 9½ acres by 1880, and to but 7 acres in 1900.

If, landless or unable to raise a living from his petty holding, the peasant hires out, he earns a wage comparable only to that of the coolie of India or China. Twenty years ago the agricultural laborer in half the provinces of European Russia was paid no more in a year than the American "farm-hand" earned in a month! According to a table

prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture in 1892, the Russian agricultural laborer received in a year about as much as his fellow of British India, a little over half as much as the Italian, a third as much as the German, a fourth as much as the Frenchman, and a fifth as much as the Briton. For the first decade of our century his daily wage without board ranged in forty-four provinces from 18 to 40 cents. The prevalent wage was from 30 to 35 cents.

These "dark" folk are scarcely more conscious of themselves than were the peasantry of England in the days of Edward III. They breed nearly three times as fast and die nearly three times as fast as people in the enlightened parts of the United States. Children arrive close together in the *izba* and a third of them are buried before they reach their first birthday. No wonder, in view of what they must undergo! Since in summer the mother is obliged to pass her day at work in distant fields, the nursling of a few months is left alone tumbling about on the dirt floor and comforting itself, when it feels the pangs of hunger, by sucking poultices of chewed bread tied to its hands or feet!

Through these clusters of human beings disease sweeps almost unopposed. Official figures show that in 1912 about 82% of the population suffered from some ailment or other. The preceding year contagious disease was four times as rife in Russia proper as in the more civilized provinces on the Baltic and the Vistula. The peasants are more scourged by disease than the townspeople. In the United States there is one doctor for every eight

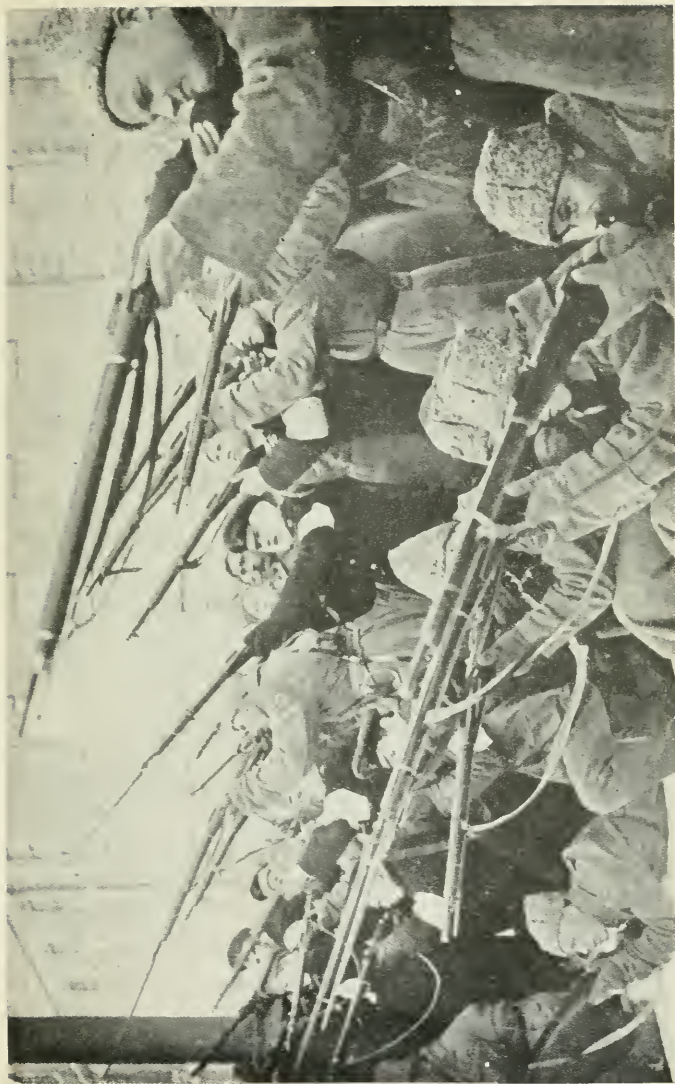
hundred persons. In Russia medical service is perhaps twenty times as scarce. The ratio in 1912 was one physician to 13,000 people in the cities and one to 21,900 in the country.

Various causes of the wretched plight of the Russian peasantry suggest themselves. The observer who grasps the significance of Malthus's Law of Population will explain it by their blind animal-like multiplication, which requires the village common lands to be divided among an ever larger number of families. Thus grows constantly the proportion of peasants with holdings too small to feed their families. So long as they propagate without foresight or restraint there is no possibility of permanently improving their condition. Even if all the arable land in Russia comes into their possession, they will experience relief only until in a few years the fatal expansion of population has taken up the slack. Then the strain will be as severe as ever and, unless the culture plane of the peasants can be raised, they will multiply until Russia is as overpeopled as China or India.

There can be, then, no lasting amelioration of the peasants' lot until their rate of increase has been curbed by the same influences which have curbed the rate of increase of a few of the more enlightened peoples. A stimulating and individualizing education of all members of the rising generation is, therefore, the only thing that will extricate these people from the quagmire into which they are sinking.

Another observer, less philosophical but well





Attacking the Czar's police during the first days of the March Revolution



A. Kollontay  
People's Commissary of Social Welfare



versed in the world's agricultural experience, might conclude:

The root of these people's poverty is poor farming. The acre yield of grains in Russia is but two thirds of the yield of Italy, Bulgaria and Roumania; scarcely a half of the yield of British India, Uruguay, Greece, France, Hungary, the United States, Canada and Argentina; two fifths of the yield of Germany and Denmark; one third or less of the yield of Holland, Japan, Norway, England, and Belgium. And this showing includes the estates, which, being better land and better farmed, yield one fourth more per acre than the lands which belong to the 109,000 peasant communes. So that, although the great Russian plain is one of the best agricultural tracts in the world, no peasantry obtains a smaller return from its tillage.

It is necessary, then, to discard the system of communal land ownership, long since abandoned in Western and Central Europe, which enslaves the peasant to the farming practices and customs of his community, which yokes the progressive few with the stagnant many, which periodically reallots the land so that one has no incentive to make improvements or to preserve or build up the fertility of the land he tills, and which requires the land to be tilled in strips so narrow that from 5 to 15 per cent. of the area cannot be properly cultivated.

Other faults of peasant agriculture are—lack of horse-power to work the land, and impoverishment of the soil owing to scarcity of live stock and to burning for fuel the straw and manure which should be

returned to the fields, the sowing of foul or weak seed, lack of proper implements and machinery for efficient farming, and ignorance of the art of good farming. The peasants will continue in a morass of misery until proper schools disseminate among the young people a knowledge of the best agricultural practices and the spirit of coöperation, while the extension of communal or government credit enables them to equip themselves with the stock and implements necessary to their work.

This is wise counsel, to be sure, but the Malthusian would insist that no doubling or trebling of crops will afford more than a temporary relief to the muzhiks unless they cease to propagate as they do. Let them be as clever farmers as the Belgians or the Japanese,—by the time they have added twenty or thirty millions to their numbers, a by-product of blind instinct, all their improved agriculture will not save them from being as necessitous as they now are.

So may the enlightened observer ruminde as to “the one thing needful” to raise the whole plane of existence of the Russian peasantry. But the peasants themselves look for relief in quite another direction.

Scattered among their village common lands are state lands, crown lands, church lands, monastery lands, the estates of 110,000 nobles, in all about 165,000,000 acres of arable land—enough, were it evenly distributed, to provide perhaps an additional ten acres for the average farm family. Property these estates are, but not property hallowed, as it is among us, by the investment of the fruits of one’s toil. The *kulaks*, or rich peasants, built up their farms bit by

bit, but the estates were gifts from the czar, centuries ago in most cases, bestowed in order to provide a basis for organizing the military defense of the nation. In such property rights the peasant acknowledges no sacredness. Even when he was a serf he stubbornly disputed his master's title to the soil. "We are yours," he would say, "but the land is ours." He looks upon the landed proprietors as usurpers. "In the consciousness of the people," declared a representative at the Congress of the Peasants' Union in 1905, "land is a gift of God like air and water. Only he who wants to work it should get it, each according to his needs." In the Duma the peasant deputy Anikin said: "We need the land not for sale or mortgage, not for speculation, not to rent it and get rich, but to work it. The land interests us not as merchandise or commodity, but as a means of raising useful products." Hence the slogan of the agrarian movement, *Zemlia narodu*, "The land to the people," i. e., the working-people.

The fact is, the peasant idealizes the ownership of land. "All around him he sees the landlords who have everything, enjoy everything, beautiful homes, elegant clothes, an abundance of food; who ride in stately carriages drawn by sprightly horses; whose children frolic at balls and dances, and gallop merrily about the country on horseback. The landlord, the peasant reasoned, had everything because he had much land. Any one who had much land could be happy. Hence he was sure that increase in his holding would lift him to a higher level of living."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hindus, *The Russian Peasant*, p. 172.

Toward the landlord the peasants feel only the hostility excited by those who come between us and our goal. The tales recounted by the graybeards keep alive among them recollections of the days of serfdom, but, such is the sweetness of nature of the Russian people, there is no dark heritage of grudges, no vindictive thirst to avenge on the present lord the wrongs of his ancestors against our ancestors. The *pomieshtchik* is a nuisance, that is all. "Let him betake himself whither he will, if only we may have his land. We have no desire to hurt him. Or, if he will stay, he shall have his share just like the rest of us. But as for tilling his acres and giving him half the crop, we will do this only so long as the czar has police and troops to coerce us,—no longer."

#### THE WORKER'S BACKGROUND OF EXPERIENCE

Forty years ago the bulk of the wares needed by the Russian common people were the product of home or village industries. It was in the later decades of the nineteenth century that capitalist industry triumphed in Russia over the older forms and grew like the mango-tree in the Hindu conjurer's trick. Lured by the almost fabulous profits of the Russian factories disposing of their products in a market protected by a very high tariff, capital hurried from Germany, Belgium, England, and other centers of accumulation, while sturdy yokels, squeezed out of their native villages by the pressure of natural increase, sought jobs in the rising industrial towns, such as Ekaterinoslav, Lódz, Baku,

Rostov, Ivanovo-Vosnesensk and Kharkov, to say nothing of Petrograd and Moscow. So absentee capitalism became maker of a new Russia.

The type of capitalist industry which struck root in Russia was naturally ultra modern. It is where capitalism comes, as it were, "of a piece," that it starts with giant units. Nowhere else, not even in America the proverbial home of large-scale enterprises, is the representative factory so big as in Russia. In 1890 there were only 108 factories in Russia employing a thousand or more workers each; in 1902 there were 262 such plants with 626,500 operatives. Monster plants of 10,000 or more hands are by no means rare. In Nijni Novgorod I heard mention of the delegates of workers from a certain concern. "How many does it employ?" I asked. "Oh, about twenty-five thousand!" During the war the Putilov works in Petrograd came to enroll 50,000. Of course, in such *colossi* all the characteristic features of capitalist industry are present in exaggerated form. Moreover, the concentration of workers makes it easy to rule and sway and wield them. Thus the average Russian cotton-mill can provide the agitator with an audience of near 700.

These three or four millions of factory workers, largely of rural origin, submitted to the mentally stimulating influence of city life and collective labor, quickly outgrow the simple ideas and low standards of living of the peasantry. The industrial worker learns to read and write, acquires self-respect, and gains a notion of how a civilized human being ought to live. He wishes to wear good clothes

and present a "decent" appearance. He resents having to rear his family in a sty. But what can he do on his wages?

Says Kovalevsky:

Our agrarian system creates millions of proletarians looking for jobs. Although very high prices for our manufactured products are maintained by our protective tariff, our home industries cannot grow fast enough to give employment to all who seek it. Moreover, wages remain very low. Nowhere in the world is there an industry which pays labor as little as ours. To judge the advantages which our manufacturers enjoy I would only need to juxtapose the figures of the profits made by Russian manufacturers and foreign manufacturers; but I prefer to limit myself to this simple statement of fact. On the average the English workingman gets \$291 a year, the French workingman \$286, the German \$239, the Austrian \$170; but the Russian workingman earns less than \$127 a year. Even taking into account the greater efficiency and skill of the foreign worker one must recognize that the Russian manufacturer enjoys a marked advantage in paying his workingmen so little.<sup>1</sup>

In 1912, when raw immigrant labor commanded \$1.65 a day in the industrial centers of the United States, this class of labor was paid about 30 cents a day in the industrial centers of Russia. In 1917 I met a machinist who had worked in all the big centers of Russia and never received more than 85 cents a day. Coming to the United States, he began work at \$2.75 a day and in five years he had never worked for less. After allowing for a slightly higher cost of living in the United States and bearing in

<sup>1</sup> *La Russie sociale* (1914), p. 110.



mind that employers reckon Russian skilled labor as 25 or 30 per cent. less efficient than American labor, it seems safe to say that under the old régime the share of the value of his product that fell to the Russian factory worker was but a third or a quarter of that received by the American factory worker!

Proletarians who can be underpaid with impunity can be overworked with impunity. Hence, the working day in Russia is shamefully long. In 1897 the law limited the working day to 11½ hours. But the law proved a dead letter, and, leaving out of account holidays, a goodly portion of the proletariat—all the miners for example—pass a full half of life at their toil.

What a bagatelle is the lot of the hand-worker in the general Russian scheme appears vividly in Tolstoy's account of a little personal investigation which set him to thinking:

An acquaintance of mine who works on the Moscow-Kursk Railway as a weigher, in the course of conversation mentioned to me that the men who load the goods on to his scales work for thirty-seven hours on end.

. . . The weigher narrated the conditions under which this work is done so exactly that there was no room left for doubt. He told me that there are two hundred and fifty such goods-porters at the Kursk station in Moscow. They were all divided into gangs of five men, and were on piece-work, receiving from one rouble to IR. 15 [fifty to fifty-eight cents] for one thousand poods [over sixteen tons] of goods received or despatched.

They come in the morning, work for a day and a night at unloading the trucks, and in the morning, as soon as the night is ended, they begin to re-load, and work on for

another day. So that in two days they get one night's sleep.

The account given by the weigher was so circumstantial that it was impossible to doubt it, but, nevertheless, I decided to verify it with my own eyes, and I went to the goods-station.

Their work always keeps them occupied more than thirty-six hours running, because it takes more than half an hour to get to their lodgings and from their lodgings, and besides, they are often kept at work beyond the time fixed.

Paying for their own food, they earn, by such thirty-seven-hour-on-end work, about twenty-five rubles a month.

To my question, why they did such convict work, they replied:

“Where is one to go to?”

“But why work thirty-seven hours on end? Cannot the work be arranged in shifts?”

“We do what we 're told to.”

“Yes; but why do you agree to it?”

“We agree because we have to feed ourselves. ‘If you don't like it—be off!’ If one's even an hour late one has one's ticket shied at one and is told to march; and there are ten men ready to take the place.”

The men were all young, only one was somewhat older, perhaps about forty. All their faces were lean, and had exhausted, weary eyes, as though the men were drunk.

Seeing my interest in their position, they surrounded me, and, probably taking me for an inspector, several of them speaking at once, informed me of what was evidently their chief subject of complaint — namely, that the apartment in which they could sometimes warm themselves and snatch an hour's sleep between the day-work and the night-work was crowded. All of them expressed great dissatisfaction at this crowding.

“There may be one hundred men, and nowhere to lie



down; even under the shelves it is crowded," said dissatisfied voices. "Have a look at it yourself. It is close here."

The room was certainly not large enough. In the thirty-six-foot room about forty men might find place to lie down on the shelves.

Some of the men entered the room with me, and they vied with each other in complaining of the scantiness of the accommodation.

"Even under the shelves there is nowhere to lie down," said they.

These men, who in twenty degrees of frost, without overcoats, carry on their backs twenty-stone loads during thirty-six hours; who dine and sup not when they need food, but when their overseer allows them to eat; living altogether in conditions far worse than those of dray-horses, it seemed strange that these people only complained of insufficient accommodation in the room where they warm themselves. But though this seemed to me strange at first, yet, entering further into their position, I understood what a feeling of torture these men, who never get enough sleep, and who are half-frozen, must experience when, instead of resting and being warmed, they have to creep on the dirty floor under the shelves, and there, in the stuffy and vitiated air, become yet weaker and more broken down.

Only, perhaps, in that miserable hour of vain attempt to get rest and sleep do they painfully realise all the horror of their life-destroying thirty-seven-hour work, and that is why they are specially agitated by such an apparently insignificant circumstance as the overcrowding of their room.<sup>1</sup>

As is to be expected of a people that has not had time to straighten up since the yoke of serfdom was

<sup>1</sup> Tolstoy, *The Slavery of Our Times*, pp. 3-12 *passim*.

lifted from its neck, the workingman does not deal with his master on a level. The employer conceives himself as a benefactor of his men. They are expected to be grateful to him for giving them work. The tone of the factory administration is arrogant and harsh. It is quite common to search the workers, men and women alike, on their leaving the factory premises. Cuffs and kicks are freely dealt out, so that the factory inspectors cite *nine thousand* charges of physical ill treatment brought against employers in a single year. Further light on the status of the Russian operative is shed by the fact that in 1912 the workers in 4,245 establishments paid *four million fines*, aggregating \$350,000.

With his wages of 30 to 50 cents a day what sort of habitation can the Russian unskilled worker afford? Professor Tugan-Baranovski writes:

The sanitary and hygienic conditions of the Russian factory are horrible. Only a few factories have dormitories for their workmen and what kind of dormitories! Men, women and children sleep side by side on wooden benches, in damp, sultry and crowded barracks, sometimes in cellars, often in rooms without windows. Most of the factories have no dormitories at all. In a workday of twelve, thirteen and fourteen hours the workmen lie down to sleep in the workshop itself, on stands, bench boards or tables, putting some rags under their heads. This is often the case even in shops where dyes or chemicals are used that impair the workman's health even in work time.

Those who lived away from the factory were more independent of their masters but not much more comfortable. An official report of an industrial suburb in the province of Valdimir speaks of

the *slobodki*, noisy, motley, gaudily coloured quarters outside the protection of the administration of the cities, outside the archaic power of the rural *mir*. Only the police had access at every hour of the day and night to these muddy haunts. The *slobodki*, with their miserable dolls' houses and their narrow streets, remind one of a gipsy encampment, the ephemeral home of circus-folk, where all is changing and impermanent. There is a constant coming and going; like so many mushrooms the little yellow houses rise singly in the midst of fields, covered with rubbish. They begin to appear in rows, finally they can no longer contain their inhabitants. Then fresh dolls' houses begin to rise beside the court-yards of the others; not a birch-tree, not a bush to be seen; nothing but dust and mud and rubbish in the streets, soot and smoke and the rumble of factories in the air.<sup>1</sup>

Tender always of the interests of the capitalists, the Romanov régime frowned upon any combined action of the workers to push up their wages. Strikes were punishable by from two to four months imprisonment, agitation for a strike by double. Nevertheless, under such repression there were more strikes in Russia than in France, Austria, or Italy. In 1905 the anti-strike law was repealed, but the Government continued to prosecute strikers when it felt itself strong enough to do so.

In 1906 a stern law was directed against agricultural laborers aiming to improve their lot by collective action. It punished strikes on the farm with imprisonment for from two to eight months; an unsuccessful attempt to foment a strike with from two to four months; membership in a society to foment

<sup>1</sup> Alexinsky, *Modern Russia*, p. 131.

such strikes with imprisonment in a fortress for from sixteen months to four years.

Worried by the marked industrial unrest, tsarism rears a noble-looking legislation on behalf of labor. It restricts the night work of women and children, limits the working day, provides for accident compensation and sets up an elaborate system of factory inspection. But the fair outside of the industrial code hides much rottenness. In secret circulars the Minister of the Interior orders the factory inspectors to do all in their power to prevent strikes. If, nevertheless, a strike occurs, they are to give the strikers to understand that they will gain no concessions from their masters until they return to work. The employer who yields to the demands of the strikers will feel the displeasure of a government which aims to keep labor cheap and in its place.

Down to the Revolution of 1905 the Government sought to repress or control labor unions. Twenty years ago it sent out its secret agents to form "safe" organizations. The workers who innocently poured into these unions often took the bit in their teeth and ran them for their own purposes, and at their meetings the "reds" debated with the "blacks" and sometimes carried the government unions right into the camp of the Social Democrats. During the brief "period of liberties" proletarian organization went forward so fast that by the end of 1906 a quarter of a million workers were in unions. The Government, however, hurried to the relief of the beleaguered capitalists. It jailed organizers, arrested trade-union officials, suppressed the labor press, and dissolved workers' organizations, till once more the

wage earner stood nearly defenseless before his employer.

The thinking proletarian therefore hates the bourgeois class, whom he regards as greedy exploiters, and is rebellious against the government which lends itself to their game. In vain does autocracy profess to shelter him with labor laws of the most advanced type and encourage workers' organizations which shall be innocent of "political" aims. Behind its smile he sees a stern and cruel organization of force quaking before the elementary power exhibited by the proletarian masses in movement.<sup>1</sup> Quite naturally, he will be unreasonably critical and suspicious of any Russian government which does not spring from the toilers themselves.

#### THE SOLDIER'S BACKGROUND OF EXPERIENCE

The Revolution finds about sixteen million men—a tenth of the population remaining in the country—in Russian uniform. Half of them are guarding communications or undergoing training in various interior cities and towns, but the other half is at the front in actual contact with the war. What has been the experience which will determine how these men will respond to the vistas opened by the Revolution?

<sup>1</sup> An incident which occurred in 1910 opened the eyes of many to the real feeling of the Government toward the workers. The coal miners on the river Lena had struck against their miserable rate of pay. They had assembled and marched through the streets but without arms in their hands and with neither the intention nor the means of using violence. The Government refused to listen to them and simply ordered the soldiers to open fire upon the defenseless crowds. Two hundred were killed outright. This needless butchery sent a thrill of horror throughout Russia. A question was asked about it in the Duma, but the minister responsible merely answered with cynical insolence "So it was, so it will be."

One need not expect in them the psychology of the professional soldier. Among the million and a half first-line soldiers the tsar threw into the war arena in August, 1914, a great number looked upon war as their trade. There were many corps of men who in the military colonies planted along the marches of the empire, on the lower Don, north of the Caucasus, fronting Turkestan, and in Eastern Siberia, had from their youth up dedicated themselves to Mars. They were in honor bound to fight for their imperial master when called on, for they had received land on that express condition. But in this third year of the war few of these watch-dogs of the tsar remain. They have been invalided or impounded in German prison camps, or their bones lie under the tortured battle-fields of Poland and Galicia. Their place has been filled by common raw peasants who for generations have looked upon the three or four years of exacted military service as a calamity. Always, the leaving of the young conscripts from the village has been an occasion of weeping and lamentation. These recruits from the plow-tail love not fighting for its own sake and will want to know why they must suffer and die. Russia's covenants with the Allies were drawn by the tsar's ministers and have never been communicated to the world. To the Russian soldiers the war aims of their Government have never been explained as those of the United States were explained—at length and with great care—to the young American soldiers in their training-camps.

Under the old régime, discipline in the sense of obedience prompted by respect for the worth and rank of one's officer scarcely existed. Things were so bad that Grand



Duke Nicholas authorized an officer to shoot down at once any man who failed to obey his first order. The terroristic system employed against the men is illustrated by an incident told me by an army surgeon who witnessed it. A man of the sanitary squad while getting his pay remarked to the company secretary that it was queer that *sanitars* and orderlies had not been included in the Easter distribution of presents among the soldiers. The secretary tattled this remark to the commandant, who thereupon beat the *sanitar* with his fist and, when the prostrate man protested, threatened to shoot him if he uttered another word. The man was then stood up for two hours in front of a trench for the Germans to shoot at, and a squad of fifty men were ordered to defile him. When they refused, they were punished by being made to stand at attention for two hours under enemy fire.

Among the officers themselves there was little discipline. They drank heavily, gambled with cards, had loose women in their quarters, and disregarded many general orders aiming to regulate their conduct in the interest of the service. Sometimes the men were sent into an unauthorized and utterly hopeless attack by their drunken officers. Scandalous, too, was the neglect of the sick and wounded by those in places of authority. As a result, the men hated their officers.<sup>1</sup>

The famous organizer of the Women's Battalion, Maria Botchkareva, testifies to the feeling among the soldiers that they were betrayed by certain high officers:

There had been rumors aplenty in the trenches of pro-German officials in the army and the Court. We had our suspicions, too, and now they were confirmed in a shocking manner.

General Walter paid a visit to the front line. He was

<sup>1</sup> Ross, *Russia in Upheaval*, pp. 229-230.

known to be of German blood, and his harsh treatment of the soldiers won for him the cordial hatred of the rank and file. The General, accompanied by a considerable suite of officers and men, exposed himself on his tour of inspection of our trenches completely without attracting a single enemy bullet! It was unthinkable to us who had to crawl on our bellies to obtain some water. And here was this party in open view of the enemy who kept such a strange silence.

The General acted queerly. He would stop at points where the barbed wire was torn open or where the fortifications were weak and wipe his face with his kerchief. There was a general murmur among the men. The word "treason!" was uttered by many lips in suppressed tones. The officers were indignant and called the General's attention to the unnecessary danger to which he exposed himself. But the General ignored their warnings, remarking, "*Nitchevo!*" ("It 's nothing.")

The discipline was so rigorous that no one dared to argue the matter with the General. The officers cursed, when he left. The men muttered:

"He is selling us out to the enemy!"

Half an hour after his departure the Germans opened a tremendous fire. It was particularly directed against those points at which the General had stopped, reducing their incomplete defenses to dust. We thought at first that the enemy intended to launch an offensive, but our expectations did not materialize. He merely continued his violent bombardment, wounding and burying alive hundreds. The cries of the men were such that rescue work could not be postponed. While the shelling was still going on I took charge and dressed some hundred and fifty wounds. If General Walter had appeared in our midst at that moment the men would never have let him get away alive, so intense was their feeling.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Yashka*, pp. 103-104.



As the war drags on and the early hopes wither, tales of the stupidity and corruption of which the war-makers have been guilty seep down to the ranks. Thus the high command took all the steel output for cannon and shells, leaving none for the needs of the railways, factories, and farms. The high command took skilled engine-drivers and telegraphers from their work and sent them to the front because their unions were reputed to be revolutionary. Millions upon millions of peasants were needlessly called away from the production of food, leaving the fields to be worked by women and old men. At one time more than four million men were assembled in interior camps who had no officers to drill them and no rifles to drill with.<sup>1</sup>

The President of the Duma returning from the front where he had seen soldiers with their feet protected only by rags torn from tents asked permission of the Minister of the Interior to call a conference of *zemstvos* to organize a supply of boots to the army. The reply he received was: "I know why you want a conference—you want to spread revolutionary ideas."<sup>2</sup>

At the trial of the former Minister of War Soukhomlinov in August, 1917, the evidence as to the suffering of the soldiers from the incompetence of the tsar's bureaucrats is heartrending. Russia began the war short even of rifles for the four and a half million men she called out. The very first

<sup>1</sup> Never has the world seen such shocking waste of labor power, such rotting of workers' morale as I saw in the garrison towns of Russia in 1917. Drilling had become a thing of the past. When they were not playing cards in the barracks the soldiers crowded the train-cars and loafed about the streets nibbling sunflower seeds.

<sup>2</sup> Wilcox, *Russia's Ruin*, p. 89.

reinforcing drafts which left for the front had only one rifle for every two men. Then it became one for every four, six, eight, ten, till at last whole companies arrived without a rifle among them. General Yanoushkevitch knew cases in which the Russian soldiers had taken off their boots and fought with them! General Velitchko testified that for a long time the soldiers not only were trained exclusively with sticks but took them into the trenches as their sole weapons and at one period forty thousand were waiting near Tarnapol "literally with empty hands." Rodzianko was with the army when the Russians could fire only three rounds at the attacking enemy and had to beat him off with sticks and stones. "It is impossible," he added, "to describe what our troops suffered, and yet naked, barefoot, and unarmed, they fought like lions."

Guchkov saw Siberian soldiers under fire in the Galician trenches "without even sticks," while seven miles away sixteen thousand men waited for the rifles of dead and wounded comrades!

Even more ghastly in its results was the shortage of shells. Before the war broke out the Ministry had ordered the shells for its new artillery program from German factories. Of course, they were never delivered. There were instances in which the Russian artillerymen were limited to one round per day, while the opposing batteries were firing thousands of shells. The thrusting of the Russian Army from Galicia in the spring of 1915 was one of the most appalling tragedies in history. Some seven hundred thousand shells burst above the shallow Russian trenches, while the Russians had no ammunition

with which to make reply. Pitted against twenty-four army corps, the devoted Russian army of fourteen corps had to retreat. The horrible needless slaughter of brave, half-armed, unprotected men left a bitterness which made men welcome revolution.

By the spring of 1917 Russia has lost in killed, invalided, and prisoners *four millions* of men. The country is nearly "bled white." In the factories one sees only elderly men or men of poor physique. Women work the fields, patch the railway embankment, care for the incoming trains, handle freight, and carry luggage. The villages are bare of hale young men. Trade is half-dead. In nearly deserted streets of the Volga cities my footsteps echo drearily. Many restaurants, resorts, and places of amusement have put up the shutters. What shops remain have scarcely anything to sell. The famed Fair of Nijni Novgorod is but the shadow of its old self. Miles upon miles of booths are not opened, while those that open soon sell out their scanty stock and put up the boards again.

Germany, hitherto Russia's chief source of supply of manufactured goods, is cut off. Submarines make it difficult to trade with Britain. Russia's factories are busy on war orders. The Trans-Siberian Railway cannot move the flood of American and Japanese goods that pours into Vladivostok. At one time a million tons of freight lie there waiting shipment to European Russia. For blocks the trains move between veritable mountains of perishable goods under matting or tarpaulins.

Meanwhile, necessities are almost unobtainable in

Russia. People stand all night in line in late autumn for a chance at a pair of boots or a blanket. The earnings of a month will not buy covering for one's feet. Even before the deluge of paper rubles an overcoat cost six times what it used to. Excepting the rich, the city people are underfed and ill clad. The peasants have enough of their coarse food, but the shelves of their coöperatives are nearly bare: there are no supplies of hardware, harness, tools, and clothing. So they get along as best they can with their cotton rags, their sheepskins, and their home-spuns.

But why should economic collapse have arrived earlier in Russia than in any of the other belligerent nations? Besides governmental incompetence, already mentioned, there was in Russia's industrial situation a factor peculiar to her.

The Russian bourgeois and aristocracy, though educated, charming, and as delightful people around a dinner-table as one could wish to meet, courteous and generous, did not have the genius for engineering or for economic management. They had a genius, and a virile one, but it turned rather toward the ballet and the opera, painting and music, literature, expansive ideas of life and thought. They could talk for hours, interestingly and informingly, of the philosophies of the world; the languages of the world they had at their tongue's tip. Being very rich, having a large surplus of financial resources, they hired the nearest effective person to be overseer of the estate, and that nearest person was in almost every instance a German or an Austrian, who had been instructed as to Russian resources,

needs, and conditions, and often, no doubt, was under secret government subsidy for the very definite purpose of penetration of the Russian land. These constituted the brain at the top of the Russian economic system. As soon as the war broke they abandoned their tasks, many of them returning to Vienna and Berlin, expecting to come again on the heels of a victorious army and own what they had previously managed; while others submerged, to become secret information agents of the German general staff. These economic ministers of the Russian world sabotaged as they went. There are certain well-authenticated instances of their setting fire to oil-fields, letting water into coal-mines, etc. Hence, within a fortnight after the declaration of war, there began a paralysis at the top of the economic system in Russia. That paralysis extended steadily down all the nerves of the system, so that increasing misery and want manifested itself in the cities and rural districts. That this really took place under the tsar's régime, is evidenced by the fact that the first revolution was preceded by bread riots in Petrograd and Moscow. Why bread riots if the economic system was functioning? This economic paralysis, which starved the army and the factory workers and broke the heart of the Russian resistance to the German power, was a fundamental thing in the disintegration of both the army and the social life of Russia.

Yes, the Russians are very war-weary,—not because they are “yellow” or “quitters,” but because they are human. They have gained nothing from the game the autocracy thrust them into. More than

any of their allies they have suffered appalling losses without being able to inflict punishment upon their enemy. They are nearing the point of asking why the blood-letting must still go on.

Most of the older line officers of pre-war training have been ground up between the cogs of the war machine. The new junior officers—young men from civil life, many of them former students and teachers—are frequently liberal in their views and humane in the treatment of their men. In the army, save in the general staff, the machine-like military type of mind is nearly extinct and more and more the reaction of the front is that of plain human beings who have suffered and are suffering unspeakably.



## CHAPTER III

### THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

**T**HE Provisional Government, which for eight months held power in Russia until it was overturned by the soviets, has its origin in the initiative of the dominating element in the State Duma. On Sunday, March 11, 1917, the President of the Duma, Rodzianko, sent to the tsar at staff headquarters the following telegram:

The situation is serious. There is anarchy at the Capital. The Government is paralyzed. The situation as regards transportation, food supplies and fuel has reached a state of complete disorganization. Public dissatisfaction is growing. Disorderly shooting is taking place on the streets. Different sections of the troops are shooting at each other. It is necessary immediately to entrust a person who has the confidence of the country with the creation of a new government. It is impossible to delay. Any delay is fatal. I pray to God that at this hour the responsibility shall not fall upon the Crown-bearer.

On the same date Rodzianko sent to all the commanders-in-chief of the army an identical telegram, adding to it the request that they support the appeal of the President of the Duma to the tsar. General Brussilov replied: "Your telegram received. I have done my duty to the Fatherland and the tsar." General Ruzsky replied: "Telegram received. Request executed."

As a matter of fact, Rodzianko's urgent telegram did not reach the tsar. It was withheld by the palace commandant, General Voyeikov, who no doubt considered it useless to acquaint his master with the demand for responsible government in view of the fact that on the previous day an order had gone out from the tsar dismissing the Duma until some time in April. The general could not have anticipated that when the council of party leaders in the Duma became acquainted with the order for dismissal it would resolve: "The State Duma shall not disperse. Deputies are to remain in their places."

On the morning of Monday, the twelfth, the President of the Duma sent a second telegram to the tsar:

The situation is becoming worse. Immediate means must be taken, for to-morrow it will be too late. The last hour has struck and the fate of the Fatherland and the Dynasty is being decided.

This telegram also remained unanswered.

Only after noon of this day did the first detachments of troops present themselves at the Tauride Palace where the Duma was sitting and proffer it their services. As soldiers under arms marched into the huge building, while telegrams came in from generals on various fronts indicating their support of the Duma, the prospects of the Revolution brightened and steps began to be taken to create a temporary government. At half-past two o'clock in the afternoon, the members of the Right having withdrawn in obedience to the tsar's order of dismissal, the Duma sat and came to the decision to form



a provisional committee of twelve "to preserve order in Petrograd and to have communication with various institutions and individuals," a non-committal phrase which left open a door of escape in case the troops at the front refused to ratify the Petrograd revolution and the Duma should be called upon to justify its action before His Imperial Majesty.

At midnight the committee, consisting of Rodzianko, Kerensky, Tcheidze, Shulgin, Miliukov, Karaulov, Konovalov, Dmitriukov, Rzhevsky, Shidlovsky, Nekrassov, and V. N. Lvov, put out the following proclamation:

The Provisional Committee of the Members of the State Duma under the difficult conditions of internal disorganization, brought about by the measures of the old government, has found itself compelled to take into its own hands the reëstablishment of the authority of the State and public order. Fully conscious of the responsibility attaching to this decision, the Committee expresses its confidence that the population and the army will assist it in the difficult problem of creating a new government, which shall be in accord with the desires of the people and which can rely upon its support.

[Signed] M. V. RODZIANKO, Chairman of the State Duma.

Two hours later the committee, having added to its membership Colonel Engelhardt and made him commandant of the revolutionary Petrograd garrison, put forth the discreet announcement:

The Duma aims to establish connection between officers and privates. Urgent necessity is felt for the organization of the masses of soldiers, animated by the best impulses, who are not yet organized; events are moving too swiftly.

Therefore, officers are invited to assist the State Duma

in every possible manner in this difficult undertaking.

Order has so far been maintained by patrols, organized by the Military Commission of the State Duma and by automobiles of armed people. Measures have been taken to guard the Arsenal, the Mint and the Peter and Paul Fortress. Hostile actions against the Fortress are undesirable. All political prisoners who were confined to cells, including the nineteen soldiers who were arrested during the last few days, have been set free.

In spite of the great differences of political and social ideals of the Members of the State Duma that make up the Provisional Committee, there is complete unity among them at the present moment. They are all confronted with the immediate problem of organizing the elemental movement.

The danger of disorganization is understood equally by all. Citizens! Organize yourselves: this is the dominant slogan of the moment.

In organization there is salvation and strength. Obey the Provisional Committee of the State Duma.

The reader will mark that no revolutionary note is struck in this proclamation. No step is taken that does not look to restoring order in a capital temporarily deprived of a government. Exile in Siberia is still to be reckoned with.

By the night of Tuesday, the thirteenth, Petrograd was virtually in the hands of the Revolutionaries. No military units showed fight in behalf of Nicholas II. The bloody-minded police, who from garrets, belfries, and roofs, had loosed masked machine-guns on the people, were being hunted out and killed in their nests. Motor-cars bristling with armed volunteers dashed madly about in search of the few remaining embers of resistance. From Moscow came the cheering news that there the officials and

police of the old régime had been overcome with almost no bloodshed. The fires had been extinguished and the railways were working. A city "militia" had been hastily enrolled to take over the social functions of the odious tsarist police, who had just been killed or jailed. Regiment after regiment swung into the Tauride Palace to pay homage to the Duma, new master of the Russian land. The streets were full of happy people ready to fall on one another's necks from love and joy.

In the meantime the political leaders sitting in close conclave were hammering out a government. To Miliukov it was given to announce the result in a speech before a gathering of sailors, soldiers and citizens in the Tauride Palace. He said in part:

We are witnessing a great historic moment. Only three days ago we were a modest opposition and the Russian Government seemed almighty. Now this government has fallen into the mud, part of which it became. And we and our friends from the Left have been brought out by the revolution, by the army and by the people, to the honorable place of the members of the first Russian public cabinet. [Loud applause.]

How is it that this event took place when only recently it seemed improbable? How did it happen that the Russian revolution which overthrew forever the old régime proved to be the swiftest and most bloodless of all revolutions known in history?

It happened because history does not know of another government so stupid, so dishonest, so cowardly, so treacherous as the government now overthrown, which has covered itself with disgrace and which has deprived itself of all roots, sympathies, and respect which bind the people to a government which possesses even a modicum of power.

We overthrew the Government easily and quickly, but this is not all that must be done. The other half of the work remains to be done—and it is the bigger half—to keep in our hands this victory so easily achieved. How can this be attained? The answer is simple and clear; we must organize the victory, and, in order to do this, first of all we must preserve that unity of will and thought which led us to victory.

Among the members of the present Cabinet there were many ancient and vital disagreements. Perhaps these disagreements will soon become important and serious, but to-day they pale and disappear before the all-important problem still to be solved, the problem of creating a new people's government to take the place of the one which has just fallen.

I hear that I am asked: "Who elected you?" No one elected us, because if we were to wait for a people's election we could not tear the power out of the hands of the enemy; while we were arguing as to whom we ought to elect, the enemy would succeed in organizing and would divide us and you. We were elected by the Russian Revolution. [Long and loud applause.]

We will not retain this authority for a moment after the freely elected representatives of the people will tell us that they wish to see in our places people more worthy of their confidence. [Applause.]

At the head of our Ministry we placed a man whose name signifies the organized Russian public [Cries: "Propertied public!"], who was implacably persecuted by the old Government: Prince G. E. Lvov, the head of the Russian Zemstvo [Cries: "Propertied Zemstvo!"] will be your Premier and Minister of Interior. He will replace his persecutor. You say: "Propertied public?" Yes, but the only one that is organized, which, therefore, will give other classes of Russian society an opportunity to organize. [Applause.] But, gentlemen, I am happy to tell you that

the non-propertied public also will have its representation in our Ministry. I have just received the consent of my comrade, A. F. Kerensky, to occupy a position in the first Russian public cabinet. [Stormy applause.] We were infinitely happy to trust in the worthy hands of this public worker that ministry in which he will render just punishment to the retainers of the old régime, to all these Stürmers and Sukhomlinovs. [Applause.] The cowardly heroes of the days forever past will find themselves by the will of fate not in the power of Scheglovitov's justice, but in the Ministry of Justice of A. F. Kerensky. [Stormy applause.] You wish to know other names? [Cries: "And you?"] As for me, my comrades have instructed me to take the leadership of the foreign Russian policy. [Stormy and lengthy applause, developing into an ovation to the speaker, who bows on all sides.] Perhaps I may prove to be a weak minister in this position, but I can promise you that, under me, the secrets of the Russian people will not fall into the hands of our enemies. [Long and stormy applause.] Now, I will name a person whose name I know will raise objections here. A. I. Guchkov was my political enemy [Cries: "Friend!"] during the entire life of the State Duma, but now we are political friends and one must be just even to enemies. Did not Guchkov, in the Third Duma, begin the rebuilding of the Russian Army, which at that time was disorganized by the Manchurian failure? He placed the first stone of that victory with which our regenerated and revived army will come out of the present great war. Guchkov and I are people of different types. I am an old professor, used to reading lectures, and Guchkov is a man of action. And even now as I am speaking to you in this hall, Guchkov is organizing our victory on the streets of the capital. What would you say if instead of taking charge of placing troops at the railroad stations last night, at which we expected troops opposed to the revolution, Guchkov had been tak-



ing part in our political disputes and the hostile troops had occupied the stations and then had occupied the streets and then even this hall? What would have happened to you and me? [Cries of approval: "Correct! How about the Minister of Marine?"]

The position of the Minister of Marine, we will leave in the hands of Guchkov, until we are able to find a worthy candidate for it.

Then, we gave two places to the representatives of that liberal group of the Russian bourgeoisie, which was the first in Russia to attempt to organize the public representation of the working class. [Applause and cries: "Where is it?"] Gentlemen, this was done by the old Government. A. I. Konovalov helped to organize the labor group at the Central War Industries Committee, and M. I. Tereshchenko did the same in regard to Kiev. [Cries from the audience: "Who is Tereshchenko?"] Yes, gentlemen, this is a name which sounds big in the South of Russia. Russia is great and it is difficult to know everywhere of our best people. [Question: "And agriculture?"]

Gentlemen, in these days when the supplying of the army is a serious and difficult problem, when the old Government has brought our Motherland almost to the edge of the precipice, when every minute's delay threatens to bring about hunger riots somewhere, and when riots have already taken place in some places, we have appointed as Minister of Agriculture, A. I. Shingarev, to whom, we believe, is assured that public support, the absence of which assured the downfall of Mr. Rittikh. [Long and loud applause. Question: "And Ways of Communication?"] To this important position during the present crisis, we have delegated N. V. Nekrassov, the Vice Chairman of the State Duma, who is especially loved by our Left comrades. [Lively applause.]

Of the eleven members of the Provisional Government, four—viz., Miliukov, Shingarev, Maniulov, and Nekrassov—belong to the Cadet party; Guchkov, and V. N. Lvov are Octobrists: Konovalov is a Progressist; Tereshchenko and Prince Lvov are non-party. Only Kerensky represents the Socialists, who doubtless already constitute the majority of the politically conscious Russians.

The overwhelming preponderance in this government of the representatives of the propertied reflects the relative strength of parties in the Duma rather than in the country. The basis of the Duma was exceedingly undemocratic. Its members had been chosen by electors selected by class groups on such a basis that there would be one elector for every 230 of the landed gentry, for every 1,000 wealthy citizens, for every 15,000 middle-class citizens, for every 60,000 peasants and for every 125,000 workingmen! The Duma, even after the ultraloyalists of the Right had withdrawn, was scarcely more representative of the toiling masses than one of our Chambers of Commerce or Merchants' and Manufacturers' Associations.

The "program" of the new government was the outcome of an agreement between the leaders of the Duma and the spokesmen of the Petrograd Soviet, and included the following clauses:

- (1) An immediate general amnesty for all political and religious offenses, including terrorist acts, military revolts, and agrarian crimes.

- (2) Freedom of speech, of the press, of association and labor organization, and the freedom to strike, with an ex-



tension of these liberties to civilians and soldiers in so far as military and technical conditions permit.

(3) The abolition of all social, religious, and national restrictions.

(4) Immediate preparations for the summoning of a Constituent Assembly, which, with universal suffrage as a basis, shall establish the governmental régime and the Constitution of the country.

(5) The substitution for the police of a national militia, with elective heads and subject to the self-governing bodies.

(6) Elections to be carried out on the basis of universal suffrage.

(7) The troops that have taken part in the revolutionary movement shall not be disarmed, and they are not to leave Petrograd.

(8) While severe military discipline must be maintained on active service, all restrictions upon soldiers in the enjoyment of social rights granted to other citizens are to be abolished.

(9) The Provincial Government wishes to add that it has no intention of taking advantage of the existence of war conditions to delay the realization of the above-mentioned measures of reform.

Particularly significant are Clauses 7, 8, and 9. The first six clauses voice the aspirations long cherished by the progressive elements among the Russian bourgeoisie. But the concluding clauses are evidently safeguards exacted by the suspicious and watchful leaders of the proletariat. These fought hard for another clause, viz., "Abstinence from all actions which would decide beforehand the formation of the future government." This proposal gave rise to stormy debates and was firmly resisted not

only by the Nationalists and the Octobrists, but also by the Cadets, who followed Miliukov in preferring a constitutional monarchy of the English type. They not only refused to proclaim a democratic republic as the popular parties desired, but they refused to pledge themselves not to establish a monarchy prior to the convening of a Constituent Assembly.

One of the first steps of the Provisional Committee was to send Guchkov and Shulgin to the tsar to procure if possible his abdication. Flushed with the victory over tsarism, the railroad men apprised the executive committee of the Soviet of this move "to come to some sort of an agreement with the Romanovs" and the committee ordered its commissaries to stop the train ordered by Guchkov and Shulgin. Nevertheless, they got through somehow, found Nicholas at Pskov (where the railway men had blocked the train on which he was hurrying to his capital), and on March 15th obtained his signature to an act of abdication on behalf of himself and his son in favor of his brother, the Grand Duke Michael. Inasmuch as Miliukov on the same day had announced, "The power will be transferred to the Regent, Grand Duke Michael," the Socialists, who wanted a democratic republic, saw that the Government intended to perpetuate the old dynasty.

On the next day, however, they had their innings. After a long conference in his palace with all the ministers of the Provisional Government, Michael was induced to sign a "Declaration from the Throne" stating that he was firmly resolved

to accept the Supreme Power only if this should be the

С т а в к а

Н а ч а л ь н и к у   Ш т а б а

Въ дни великой борьбы съ внѣшнимъ врагомъ, стремящимся почти три года поработить нашу родину, Господу Богу угодно было ниспослать Россіи новое тяжкое испытаніе. Начавшіяся внутреннія народныя волненія проявятъ бѣдственно отразиться на дальнѣйшемъ веденіи упорной войны. Судьба Россіи, честь героической нашей арміи, благо народа, все будущее дорогое нашего Отечества требуютъ доведенія войны во что бы то ни стало до побѣднаго конца. Жестокій врагъ напрягаетъ послѣднія силы и уже близокъ часъ, когда доблестная армія наша совместно со славными нашими союзниками сможетъ окончательно сломать врага. Въ эти рѣшительные дни въ жизни Россіи почла МЫ долгомъ совѣсти облегчить народу НАШЕМУ тѣсное единеніе и сплоченіе всѣхъ силъ Народныхъ для скорѣйшаго достиженія побѣды и въ согласіи съ Государственною Думою признали МЫ за благо отречься отъ Престола Государства Россійскаго и сложить съ СЕБЯ Верховную власть. Не желая разстаться съ любимымъ Сыномъ НАШИМЪ МЫ передаемъ наследіе НАШЕ Брату НАШЕМУ Великому Князю МИХАИЛУ АЛЕКСАНДРОВИЧУ и благословляемъ Его на вступленіе на Престолъ Государства Россійскаго. Заговѣдуемъ Брату НАШЕМУ править дѣлами государственными въ полномъ и ненарушимомъ единеніи съ представителями народа въ законодательныхъ учрежденіяхъ, на тѣхъ началахъ кои будутъ ими установлены, принеся въ томъ ненарушимую присягу. Во имя горячо любимой родины, принимаемъ всѣхъ вѣрныхъ сыновъ Отечества къ исполненію своего святого долга, передъ Нимъ, повиновеніемъ Царю въ тяжелую минуту всенародныхъ испытаній и помочь ЕМУ вмѣстѣ съ представителями народа вывести Государство Россійское на путь побѣды, въ Псковъ, благоденствія и славы. Да поможетъ Господь Богъ Россіи.

Г Псковъ  
2<sup>го</sup> Марта 15 час 5 мин 1917 г

*Михаилъ Александровичъ Романовъ*  
*Александръ Александровичъ Романовъ*

*Николай*

Act of Abdication of Nicholas II, March 16, 1917

Тяжелое бремя возложено на Меньше  
Брата моего, переехавшего Митро-  
политариатом Всероссийским Гурьевым  
в поводу безграничной войны и вели-  
кий народный гонимый

Обузданный единомысленно со всеми  
народными массами, чья выше всего  
благо Родины нашей, принимаю Я твер-  
дое решение в том смысле считать все-  
принять Государственную власть, если только  
будет воле Великого народа нашего,  
которому и принадлежат всеародные  
законодательные права представляемый сейчас  
в Государственный Союз, уполномочен  
образовать правительство и новые основные  
законы Государства Российского -

Тому призывая благословение  
Божие прошу взять гражданство Перевод  
Российской подчиниться Временному  
Губернаторству, по поводу Государствен-  
ной Души возникшему и обремененному  
всем полнотою власти, вверю до того,  
как повеленное в волею крайней-  
шей ступень, на основе всеобщего, приемного,  
равного и тайного законодательства, Государствен-  
ного Союзу своим временным об-  
разом правления выразить волею  
народа. М. М. Календа

3/III - 1917.

Петроград.

Act of Abdication of the Grand Duke Michael, March 17, 1917

desire of our great people, who must by means of a plebiscite, through their representatives in the Constituent Assembly, establish the form of government and the new fundamental laws of the Russian State.

Invoking God's blessing, I, therefore, request all citizens of Russia to obey the Provisional Government, set up on the initiative of the Duma and vested with plenary powers, until, within as short a time as possible, the Constituent Assembly, elected on a basis of universal, equal, secret, and direct suffrage, shall express the will of the nation regarding the form of government to be adopted.

Kerensky was the principal spokesman and himself inspired the document which the grand duke signed. Michael's formal recognition before all Russia of the authority of a body to be chosen by a "universal, equal, secret, and direct" suffrage was a clear victory for the Soviet. No doubt it was made plain to him that the revolutionary soldiers and the armed workingmen would be heard from if an attempt were made to force monarchy upon the people before the decision of the Constituent Assembly.

Another circumstance which stirred the revolutionaries was that at the time of his abdication Nicholas II notified the Senate of the appointment of Prince Lvov as President of the Council of Ministers. This perfectly natural endeavor of the new government to come before the Russian people with an authority as complete as possible was resented as a denial of the principle of people's sovereignty supposed to be established by successful revolution.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE SOVIETS

IT is time now to go back and describe the formation of a power destined to check, hamper, and in the end overthrow, the Government of Property.

In Russian "soviet" means "council," and had originally no revolutionary flavor. Under the old régime the Upper Chamber was known as the *Gosudarstvennyi Soviet*, i. e., Imperial Council. There were all kinds of soviets—medical, scientific, industrial, etc. In October, 1905, a Soviet of Workmen's Delegates was formed in Petrograd and lasted until January. Trotsky was at one time its president and like its successor it had a bulletin known as *Izvestia* ("News"). It had also its guardsmen to protect its leaders from arrest when they appeared on the street.

The strikes, street meetings, and demonstrations of March 8th–10th, revealed an elemental movement, which was developing, however, without organization or leadership. Feeling the urgent need of a center of information and direction, the Petrograd Union of Workers' Consumers' Societies, in concert with the Social Democrats in the Duma, called a conference of workingmen of different districts in its offices on the afternoon of Saturday, March 10th. About thirty persons were present, including several political leaders of the labor movement.



After reports on the situation had been heard it was resolved to set about forming a soviet of workers' delegates along the lines of the Soviet of 1905. The factories were to be notified to choose their delegates at once and the soviet was to meet on the following day.

But the scheme failed of realization. Later in the day about half the participants in the conference were arrested while conferring with the labor group at the office of the Central War Industries Committee and this incident held up the execution of the plan. Events developed with such dizzying speed that the organization of the Soviet came about as the result of action in another place and in different circumstances.

On Monday morning the workingmen, despite the order of the commandant of the Petrograd Military District to report for work, stayed away from their factories. Five military units went over to the side of the revolutionists. The Arsenal and the Kresty Prison were taken and the political prisoners, including the workingmen above mentioned, were released. Armed soldiers and workingmen with red banners were rushing about the city in automobiles. The rebellious troops began to gather at the Tauride Palace. When the Duma sat at two o'clock representatives of labor organizations began to gather in Room 12 of the same building. They were met by Kerensky, Tcheidze, and Skobelev, "who looked very pale and whose eyes were burning." There was no time to lose. Events called for quick decisions. Therefore this little group decided to send messengers immediately to all the labor districts,



calling upon them to elect delegates to the Soviet. The appeal ran:

Citizens! The representatives of workers, soldiers, and of the people, who are meeting in the State Duma, announce that the first meeting of their representatives is to take place to-day at seven o'clock in the evening in the building of the State Duma. All the troops that have gone over to the side of the people should immediately elect their representatives, one for each company.

Factories should elect their deputies, one for each thousand workers. Factories that have fewer than one thousand workmen should elect one deputy each.

[Signed] Provisional Executive Committee of the  
Soviet of Workers' Delegates.

At nine o'clock in the evening Tcheidze, the schoolmaster elected to the Duma from the Caucasus, opens the Soviet of Workers' Delegates with from one hundred and twenty-five to one hundred and fifty persons present. Officers are elected and a Credentials Committee is appointed to examine the credentials of those present. Late at night a military commission is created which at once sets to work. Toward morning comes Rodzianko with the suggestion that it combine with a like commission of the Provisional Committee, which is done. The soviet creates an executive committee of fifteen. The soviet sits again the next day and two days later there is a meeting of the military units of the Petrograd garrison at which nine representatives of soldiers are elected to the executive committee. From now on begins to function the "Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates" destined to make for itself a name that will resound in history.

This Soviet, which will come to include well above a thousand delegates, is really the parliament of the masses, for they have little confidence in the Duma, which appears to them as the very citadel of Privilege and Property. But the need, felt by the factory operatives and by the garrison of the capital, of having an organization of their own is felt by like elements all over Russia. So the soviet idea spreads quickly throughout the country. Soon every town will have its soviet, every company, battalion, regiment, division, army corps, its "executive committee." In time agitators will appear even in the villages. There will be soviets of peasants' delegates and presently an All-Russian Congress of such delegates.

In September, 1917, I had the opportunity of looking into the Soviet of Nijni Novgorod, which may be regarded as typical. To this soviet a delegate may be sent by every factory with fifty or more workmen. The big concerns are allowed representation for every five hundred workmen or workwomen. Any fifty persons in the same craft or calling may come together and pick their delegate. Any class of employees—even reporters, bookkeepers, and bank clerks—have a right to representation. On the other hand, doctors, lawyers, clergymen, merchants, capitalists, and landed proprietors are not considered as belonging to the proletariat. About one-sixth of the Soviet is composed of delegates named by the various proletarian parties, Social Revolutionists, Social Democrats (Bolsheviki and Mensheviki), People-ists, etc.

The soldiers of the local garrison by companies

name delegates to the soldiers' soviet. These two soviets in Nijni-Novgorod maintain a joint executive committee, composed of thirty workmen and twenty soldiers, which meets, perhaps, twice a week. Of the thirty working-class members, perhaps twenty give their entire time, and are paid the equivalent of their ordinary wages.

The Petrograd Soviet is much more than a deliberative body. It maintains numerous "sections" which busy themselves with the interests of the Revolution and of the masses. These are: Military, Naval, Labor, Agrarian, Medical-Sanitary, Railroad, Propaganda and Literature, Preparation for Constituent Assembly, International Relations, Out-of-Town and Local Government, Munitions, Army Provisionment, and For Combating Counter-Revolution. The activities of certain of these "sections" throw much light on the subsequent course of the Revolution. The "Propaganda and Literature" group carries on an oral propaganda and distributes pamphlets and leaflets. By September it can boast of having put into circulation 605,850 copies of books and pamphlets. The out-of-town group keeps up relations with soviets all over Russia. On the average it receives daily from ten to fifteen delegations. The Section for Combating Counter-Revolution collects information about elemental disorders and counter-revolutionary activities by individuals and groups. It reports its findings not only to the ministry concerned but also to the local soviet. It is work of this sort, by democratic members of the *Intelligentsia* in association with the élite among the workers, first in the capital and then in every in-

dustrial center of Russia, which accounts for the fact that in the course of four years, control has never been wrested from the hands of the proletarians who made the Revolution.

In these soviets—composed, outside the great centers, chiefly of ignorant, even illiterate factory hands, without experience in organization—everything depends upon the kind of men who lead. In an agitated, confused time with no past to guide them the delegates may be carried in one direction by one set of leaders and swept in exactly the opposite direction by another group which wins their confidence. Now, in the beginning, the soviets are under the influence of the political leaders who happened to be on the spot when the Revolution occurred, and these are moderates whose principles the old régime tolerated. Tcheidze, the first president of the Petrograd Soviet, is a Menshevik. Of the vice-presidents one, Skobelev, is a Menshevik, while Kerensky is a Social-Revolutionist. Most of the members of the executive committee are educated men and many of them hold university degrees.

One of the first acts of the Provisional Government, however, is to bring back to Russia the political victims of autoeracy. From Siberia about eighty thousand are brought out. From Switzerland, France, Scandinavia, the United States, even from Argentina and other remote countries, come perhaps ten thousand who have been refugees from the tsar's vengeance. In all ninety thousand at least, virtually all of them of socialist sympathies, stream into European Russia in late April, May, June, and July. Honored by a grateful people for

their voluntary sacrifices and sufferings they quickly rise to a commanding influence in the local soviets and carry them irresistibly toward the political Left.

## CHAPTER V

### OPPOSITE CONCEPTIONS OF THE REVOLUTION

THE one thing common to nineteen-twentieths of the Russian people at this moment is *disillusionment*. It is as if in mass meeting assembled they should call before them the tsar and the grand dukes and say:

“Little Father, Grand Dukes, once we believed in you, feared you and trusted you. We imagined that the thing you stand for is necessary to the preservation of the Russian land. But now we think so no longer. We see you for what you are—brutal, corrupt, destructive. We ’ve given you all we had, yet you can’t even protect the Russian State. We ’ve given you four millions of our brothers and sons. But the feet of the invaders are on Russian soil. Away with you!”

It is as if they should call before them the representatives of the Greek Catholic Church, the Metropolitans and the Archbishops, and say to them:

“Holy Fathers, we used to believe in you, we deemed you necessary to our lives. We believed the good words you spoke, the kindly things you said. We believe in you no longer. We see you now for what you are. For two hundred years you have been Autocracy’s spies. You have taxed us for birth, marriage, and death. You have provided Gregorian chants and stately ritual in splendid

churches with golden domes, while we shiver and starve. You have talked peace to us, and mercy and love. Yet you have supported the tsars and the Cossack whip and sword. You are enemies of the people. Away with you!"

It is as if they should call before them the princes, counts, and barons and say to them:

"You princes, you counts, you barons, we used to believe in you. We used to think that you were necessary so that we could be fed and clothed and housed. Now for three years we have been cold and hungry. We recognize you now for what you are—parasites. We refuse to let you ride any longer on our backs. Away with you!"

But sharing the same disillusionment does not mean that the Russian people entertain the same idea of the good the Revolution is to bring them. There are current at least three conceptions as to what the Revolution will mean.

What chiefly disgusted the educated people, the *Intelligentsia*, with the old régime was its outraging of human dignity by its spying, letter-opening, wire-tapping, censorship, arbitrary searches and seizures, and interference with free movement and free communication. These degrading tsarist tactics wounded deeply their self-respect, so for them the Revolution is the opening of an era of Freedom—freedom to go about at will without passports, freedom of speech, of the press, of agitation, of public demonstration, of association, religious freedom, freedom of oppressed nationalities, removal of all hampering restrictions on women. Furthermore, it implies the abolition of legal classes, uni-



versal suffrage, a government obedient to the people, and the spread of popular education.

The Party of Popular Freedom, nicknamed "Cadets" (*Ka Day* being the initials of the words Constitutional Democrats, the original name of the party) expect a "liberal" régime of the type which began to prevail in England after the reform of 1832. They overlook the rise since that date of capitalistic production and the diffusion of socialistic ideas through the proletariat.

The business and propertied classes have been alienated from the old régime chiefly by its corruption, waste, and stupidity. They remember its incapacity either to keep the peace or to wage successful war. They are tired of blundering and favoritism in matters in life and death to the Russian land. They are deeply mortified that the destiny of a great state should hinge on the intrigues of a detestable monk like Rasputin playing upon the superstitions of high-placed women. For them the Revolution is to mean the control of the State by intelligence and character. It is to mean Efficiency.

As soon as one leaves the privileged classes and goes among the toiling mass one comes upon a very different conception of the blessings the new order is to bring. The toilers are not content with gaining freedom. They are not content with an efficient governmental machine. They want something more. The experience of excessive toil and bitter privation makes them yearn for a larger share of the fruits of their labor. In a dim way they realize that all the splendor, luxury, and profligate waste of the kept classes comes out of the product of their

toil. And they are determined that they must have *more*; the lord, the employer, the speculator, *less*. To them revolution holds *the promise of living better*. The peasants count on adding the lord's estate to their scanty stock of common land; the wage earners expect that their "exploitation" is to cease. The Revolution is to mean Justice.

It is impossible that these expectations of the broader layers of the people should be realized without great disturbance to establish property rights. If the landed proprietors be not dispossessed how is the Revolution to make bread more plentiful in the peasant's hut? If the capitalists retain the right to absolute disposal over their factories and mines, by what means can the workers acquire for themselves a much larger part of their product? The distribution of wealth controls in large measure the distribution of current income. The distribution of current income controls in large measure the distribution of welfare, of comfort, of culture, of self-respect and social prestige.

To be sure, a régime of freedom would in time react upon the distribution of wealth so as to take it out of the hands of weak or inefficient persons and bring it into the grasp of the strong and capable. In time the mountainous private fortunes built up under a government which catered to the great land-owners and the big capitalists would be worn down. By the end of this century, perhaps, the distribution of wealth in Russia might come to resemble the distribution of wealth in France or Norway. In the long run the freedoms which have become established in modern bourgeois society would

have profoundly changed the distribution of wealth in Russia.

But human life is for the short run. Was it not too much to expect that the robbed, toiling masses of Russia should content themselves with a prospect of comparative comfort for their children, or, in any case, for their grandchildren? For years most of the toilers have been dreaming of some day entering the Promised Land. Will they pause at the threshold and turn back to wander again in the wilderness out of reverence for the legal rampart of property rights which bars their way? In talking with many property-holders to whom I presented letters of introduction in the summer of 1917 I found them strangely inconsistent. One and all they agreed that the old régime was an iniquitous régime. But if such were the case the distribution of wealth which that régime contributed to bring to pass must be iniquitous too. And being iniquitous it stood in need of being corrected. But I found no property-owner who drew any such conclusion. Without exception the members of the possessing class I talked with assumed that the actual titles to wealth were in no wise to be called in question. It never occurred to them that without startling economic readjustments the "freedom" the Revolution brought might prove empty and unsatisfying to the peasants and the factory hands.

Hence, very soon after the downfall of the hated autoocracy appears a rift in national sentiment which deepens day by day. On the one hand are the comfortable people who insist that the Revolution has already fulfilled itself, that now it is the part of all



L. Kamenev  
President of the Moscow Soviet



A. Lunacharsky  
People's Commissary of Education

good citizens to settle down and enjoy the new freedom and new efficiency without any further upsetting of conditions. On the other hand, are the horny-handed, living in one-room huts or kennels in congested slums, eating black bread and cabbage soup and looking for an improvement in their miserable lot which somehow fails to materialize.

Here in these unsatisfied desires, in the unfulfilled, long-cherished expectations of the working masses, is the secret of the instability and weakness of the Provisional Government. No power on earth could prevent the Revolution from going on to be completed by a fundamental social and economic change. The only doubt is as to whether this change will be accomplished in an orderly way by the Constituent Assembly, or will come earlier by a *coup d'état* on the part of the leaders of the masses.



## CHAPTER VI

### AGITATION

**I**N one of his yarns Münchhausen tells of a day so cold that, although the post-boy rides his route and blows his horn as usual, not a sound comes from it. But, after his horn has been hung in the warm station room, the frozen notes thaw and come tumbling out! So it is when the sun of freedom shines after the freezing night of despotism. Of a sudden all the long pent-up complaints, thoughts, projects, and dreams rush to be expressed.

During the spring and summer of 1917 a veritable whirlwind of public discussion rages over Russia. It seems as if these people cannot get their fill of public meetings. On Sunday one will attend four or five political gatherings of the most varied tendencies and return to his home at night tired but perfectly happy. Has he not indulged all day in what, but a few weeks since, was forbidden fruit?

The supreme joy of the new citizen is to parade in political procession with a banner above him, a band in front, and cheering thousands of spectators on each side of him. He walks with his head up and his heels hit the pavement with a ring. He is conscious now of embodying a bit of his nation's sovereignty.

Never was there a more brilliant opportunity for men of ideas who can speak well on their feet. The



people are insatiable. What hosts of patient listeners! With votes for all—women as well as men—and with the elections for the Constituent Assembly in the offing, they are endeavoring to provide themselves within a few months with the political convictions which the citizen of a free state inherits from his father or accumulates gradually in the course of years. And how intoxicating it is from doorsteps, lamp posts, soap-boxes, sometimes even from balconies and platforms, to unpack one's soul, to preach one's little gospel! So men hurry from group to group, talking and talking till their voices vanish.

When the cave of the winds is unsealed, those, of course, have the advantage who had been trained in the 1905 revolution and since then in a free country like America have continued practice in public speaking and in organizing the toilers. The bewildered leaderless Russian masses are thrilled and captivated by these ready, self-confident men who tell them just what they must do in order to garner for themselves the fruits of their Revolution. This is why refugees, obscure to us altho not to Russians, who in exile had been obliged to work in our steel mills and tailor shops for a living, former residents of New York's "East Side," who lived precariously from some Russian newspaper we Americans never heard of, will rise to be heads of soviets and, later, cabinet ministers of a government ruling a tenth of the human race. In all modern history there is no romance like it.

In this vast Babel of discussion nothing is taken for granted. No institution that was a part of the

hated past is too sacred to alter. The spirit is "Everything to the melting-pot." So multitudes of unlettered, untutored men are suddenly called to sit in judgment upon such deep, difficult matters as army discipline, the factory-owner's authority, the right of the proprietor, the procedure of courts of justice, foreign relations, war aims, the issue of central government versus local government. Most of them are honest and serious. As they listen they scowl from very effort of thought. They understand quite well that the welfare of the community should be preferred to their private interest when the two conflict. So far as sound doctrine can be made clear and attractive to them they will embrace it. But on a question like factory-control by the workers or common ownership of farmland, in which truth is difficult and unpalatable, while error is plausible and pleasing, they are likely to go wrong.

The radical leaders are eager to make hay while the sun shines. They fear the resources the propertied class will be able to put behind its counter-agitation and they aim to obtain a decision on fundamental matters such as peace and land *before the propertied have had time to organize their resistance*. Each factory, each village, each regiment, must be roused and organized. Sometimes the workers' committee in the factory sends workmen on employer's pay to agitate in the villages. Thus the town bourgeoisie are made to support the campaign to destroy the country bourgeoisie!

Much of the agitation carried on among the toilers is most reckless. The revolutionists set afloat short, simple, catchy slogans appealing to the elementary

instincts of the people, which embody promises incapable of immediate fulfilment. It is asserted that the sending of a railway commission by the American Government to help solve Russia's transportation problem indicates America's intention to seize for herself the Trans-Siberian Railway. The men in the trenches are told that American capitalists are paying Kerensky so much for every Russian soldier killed. For three years, within Russia, enmity has been systematically fomented and organized against the Central empires. So the Bolsheviks—whose sentiment might well be "A plague on both your houses"—aim to reveal the victimized German toilers behind the Kaiser's militarism and, on the other hand, to reveal British, French, and American economic imperialism behind the democratic professions of the Entente.

Mixed in with the sincere agitators are agents of the German Government, busily sowing doctrines that will, it is hoped, set the Russians by the ears. This baleful influence of Germany upon Russia's domestic life is a thing of long standing. Unburned portions of the records in the wrecked Department of Justice Building in Petrograd show that it ran back at least forty years.

From these records it develops that for more than twenty years prior to 1914 two groups under German imperial surveillance operated in Russia—two distinct groups, perhaps unknown one to the other, with distinct methods, working for a common end. One group worked with the extreme Right and sought to influence the Government through the autoeracy, its culminating achievement being the ad-

vancement of the pro-German Stürmer to the head of the Ministry in January, 1916. This group aimed to promote disintegration by favoring the extreme reactionary position.

Simultaneously another group with German funds and under German direction, extreme Left in tendency, operated among the revolutionary elements in Russia, aiding and urging them on to revolutionary activity against the autocracy. There were several files of the records which showed how here and there in different places in Russia an impecunious worthless element of the Russian nobility was bought by German agents to serve their purposes. For instance, a Russian lady in reduced circumstances begins to hold meetings of revolutionists in her respectable home. Sympathetically she lends an ear to their tales about the death-in-life in Siberia, the sufferings of the poor and oppressed. She is provided with money to furnish to the revolutionary circles, allows German agents to sit in and foment terroristic activity, and reports everything to the German group.

No doubt Germany found means to promote the diffusion of Bolshevistic ideas so long as Bolshevism was weakening Russia's capacity to resist Germany. On the other hand, when the Bolsheviks were in power and creating a new order, she followed her old tactics of supporting the groups to the right and left of them. When the nests of anarchists in Moscow were raided in the spring of 1918 the Bolsheviks found there German machine-guns of a new model, not hitherto met with in Russia!

## CHAPTER VII

### POLITICAL GROUPINGS AND PROGRAMS

OWING to the frozen-up state of the Russian people under autocracy, political opinion is in a stage very different from that seen in free countries. Thanks to the obstructions the police put in the way of the propagation of "illegal" ideas, the larger part of the masses is politically inert, has in fact no opinion at all on public questions. In this respect, however, the factory-workers are far wider awake than the huge soggy peasant mass. Seeing that they live and work *together*, a good deal of underground propaganda has gone on among them despite the police and the spies. This is why, although the peasants outnumber the proletariat six to one, it is the latter, not the former, that will break down the domination of the bourgeois and grasp the steering-wheel of the new order.

Naturally, centers of protest against the autocratic régime appeared in Russia before centers of defense; so it is the radical parties that are the older. In the seventies of the last century the slogan was raised, "Go to the people, learn to know their real needs, and find means to lift them out of their wretched lot." Its friends called themselves People-ists (*Narodniki*). Out of this movement developed the Party of Toil (*Trudoviki*) and the Social Revolutionaries. The former appeared in the days

of the first Duma and was composed of peasants bent on getting the land and an idealistic element in the *Intelligentsia* to whom peasant aspirations were gospel. Since it is a tolerated group, public men like Kerensky belong to it until they become free to join that banned party with a terrorist record, the Social Revolutionaries.

This party was organized in 1901 and its great slogan is "All the land to all the people," the idea being not to create little proprietors in place of big ones, but to do away with private property in land and found land-occupancy upon a use basis. But while it advocates land-nationalization, it does not urge factory-nationalization. It is anti-monarchist, anti-imperialist, and anti-militarist. It is the party of the venerated Breshko-Breshkovskaya, of Tchernov, Spiridonova, Savinkov, and Kerensky. With respect to the war and the "dictatorship of the proletariat" it is destined to split into a Right, led by Madame Breshkovskaya, a Center led by Tchernov, and a Left led by Miss Spiridonova.

The All-Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party composed of straight-out Marxians, dates from 1898. Its strength lies in the members of the liberal professions, the students, and the factory-workers. In the rural villages it meets with little response. At its congress in Switzerland in 1903 the party split on the question of the tactics to be pursued in bringing about the socialist order in society. The more radical group, led by Lenin, was in the majority and thenceforth came to be known within the party as *Bolsheviki* or *Majoritists*. To translate *Bolshevik*



“Maximalist,” as was the practice of most newspaper correspondents in Russia in 1917, is to confound this group with a small extreme-Left group of the Social-Revolutionary Party. Likewise their opponents, known as *Mensheviki* (*Minoritists*), ought not to be called “Minimalists.”

Each of these factions considers itself the rightful heir of the party name and prestige. The Bolsheviks hold the “central committee” of the party, together with the Petrograd and Moscow committees. The Mensheviks are intrenched in the “organization committee” of the party. These evolutionary socialists—followers of Teheidze, Tsereteli, Skobelev, Lieber, and Dan—find their support chiefly among the town intellectuals, workingmen who have been organized either into coöperatives or into trade unions, a sprinkling of small entrepreneurs fallen under the influence of socialism and a majority of the Jewish socialistic *Bund*. The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, who are revolutionary Socialists, find their strength among the class-conscious workers and the poorer peasants.

Plekhanov, father of Russian Marxism, is by himself with a small Group of Unity (*Yedinstvo*). By vigorously supporting Russia’s prosecution of the war, even going so far in 1916 as to urge Russian workmen not to strike while their Government is locked in struggle against the Kaiser, he lost his leadership of the Mensheviks. Upon his return to Russia in April, 1917, he throws all his influence for the war rather than for social reconstruction, so that he and his followers are jeered at as “social patriots.” Between the Mensheviks and the Bolshe-



viks stand the Menshevik Internationalists led by Martov.

The Constitutional Democrats ("Party of Popular Freedom") popularly known as Cadets, were liberals following the lead of Professor Miliukov. Before the Revolution they stood for constitutional monarchy, freedom of speech, of assemblage and of the press, universal suffrage, progressive income taxes, and legal protection of labor. Their agrarian program recognized that the land must go to the peasants, but insisted that the landed proprietors must be compensated by its full value in government bonds. On account of its tenderness for the rights of property the Cadets have no following whatever among the peasants or workers. Their support is chiefly among the comfortably-off *Intelligentsia*, although not a few landowners adhere to it.

Originally idealistic so far as the implications of capitalism would allow it to be so, the Cadet Party very quickly changes its character after the Revolution. Having nowhere else to go, all the Reactionaries, Conservatives, and Octobrists clamber into it. Then upon the heaving up of the Bolshevik menace its idealists become chiefly law-and-order men. It speedily becomes the champion of the rights of property and its earlier solicitude for the aspirations and welfare of all classes of society ceases to be perceptible after it comes to be financed and directed by noble land-owners and great capitalists. For this reason the Cadets, who at one time had a certain claim on the people's gratitude, end by being intensely hated by the proletariat while they lose the sympathy of the social-minded *Intelligentsia*.

Nothing would be further from the truth than to imagine that Russians generally are at this time adherents of one or another of these parties. These parties, most of them incoherent and unstable, at first number their followers by tens of thousands, not by hundreds of thousands or millions. They are nuclei for agitation, centers of crystallization in a cooling solution. Or one might compare them to ferments cast into a plasm. In thousands of meetings and in millions of newspapers, pamphlets, broadsides and placards they spread their political principles before the new citizens. Before the leaf is sere it will become apparent to all which parties are the winners in this competition for adherents.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE FLOOD OF POLITICAL REFORMS

**A**BSOLUTELY honest" is Steklov's characterization of the Provisional Government after a month of dealing with it as representative of the soviet. "With all our skepticism, the sight of the regeneration of that group of the propertied bourgeois elements in the storm of revolutionary events was very instructive." "M. Rodzianko was so shaken by events—to him they were even more unexpected than to us—that he lost the ability to resist our most extreme demands." "Still more interesting was the behavior of Shulgin, who in 1905-6 was engaged in the suppression of the Revolution and who is well known to you as the organizer of the 'black hundreds.' This man when I read 'to proceed forthwith to arrange for convoking the Constituent Assembly on the basis of universal, direct, equal and secret suffrage,' nervously got up from his seat, came over to me, and said, 'If I had been told two days ago that I should be listening to these demands and would not only not be objecting to-day but would be insisting that there is no other solution, and that this hand would be writing the abdication of Nicholas II, I would have called any one making such a prediction a madman.' "

This new cabinet works without defined responsibility to any one. The tsar is under arrest. The

Imperial Council no longer exists. The Duma, having given birth to the Provisional Government, has adjourned and will never again be officially convened. The new reform laws have only to be drawn up by experts, submitted to the Juridical Commission headed by Kokoshkin, a member of the Duma, and then promulgated.

Accordingly, with breathless speed the charters of freedom sought by *duma* after *duma* since 1906, and always denied or mutilated by reactionary ministers of the tsar, are carried into effect. The old laws and odious administrative practices restricting the liberty of the citizen in a manner totally unknown in other parts of the civilized world are thrown into the discard. Instead of being held in jail months or even years without trial, the arrested person must be brought before an examining magistrate within twenty-four hours or else released. Capital punishment is abolished. The new justice will not hear of "administrative process," the bureaucrats' device for destroying their opponents without trial. Newspapers, books, theaters, and public meetings are freed from censorship. The ground is cut from under the feet of the *okhrana*, for violation of the secrecy of the post, the telegraph, or the telephone, is made a punishable offense. The official, no longer privileged to wrong private citizens with impunity, can be punished like any other offender for exceeding the powers with which he has been invested by law. He may be even prosecuted for unreasonable dilatoriness in case his culpable delay has caused a citizen to suffer loss.

The oppressed nationalities are liberated. Within

a week the Finnish Constitution, trampled on by the tsar, is restored and ere a month has passed Kerensky, addressing the Diet at Helsingfors, greets the free Finnish people in the name of the Provisional Government. Soon appears an Appeal to the Poles guaranteeing a Free Poland which shall determine its form of government by a Constituent Assembly convoked in Warsaw, and which, it is hoped, will enter willingly into a military union with Free Russia.

At the same time a brotherly hand is stretched out to the Jewish people long pent up within a pale of settlement in Poland and western Russia. At a stroke are repealed all laws embodying limitations on them concerning:

(1) Selection of place of residence and change of residence.

(2) Acquiring rights of ownership and other material rights in all kinds of movable property and real-estate, and likewise in the possession of, the use and managing of all property, or receiving such for security.

(3) Engaging in all kinds of trade, commerce, and industry, not excepting mining; also equal participation in the bidding for Government contracts, deliveries and in public auctions.

(4) Participation in joint stock and other commercial or industrial companies and partnerships, and also employment in these companies and partnerships in all kinds of positions, either by election or by appointment.

(5) Employment of servants, salesmen, foremen, laborers, and trade apprentices.

(6) Entering the Government service, civil as well as military, and the grade or condition of such service; participation in the elections for the institutions of local self-

government, and all kinds of public institutions; serving in all kinds of positions of Government and public establishments, as well as the prosecution of the duties connected with such positions.

(7) Admission to all kinds of educational institutions, whether private, Government or public, and the pursuing of the courses of instruction of these institutions, and receiving scholarships. Also the pursuit of teaching and the other educational professions.

(8) Performing the duties of guardians, trustees, or jurors.

(9) The use of languages and dialects, other than Russian, in the proceedings of private societies, or in teaching in all kinds of private educational institutions, and in commercial bookkeeping.

The mere rehearsal of these manifold discriminations exposes the true character of the old régime.

The tsarist state put itself behind the Russian Orthodox Church. The Orthodox parent who did not present his child for baptism would be punished. No such child would be received into any school. The Jews, Lutherans, Roman Catholics, Armenians, and Mohammedans were allowed to teach their religion to their children, but woe to them if they were caught trying to convert any of the Orthodox to their faith! On the other hand, the Orthodox Church was free to convert whom she could. The new Government hastens to put an end to such favoritism. As regards liberty of propagating their doctrines, all religions are now placed on the same footing.- When in August the first Council of the Russian Orthodox Church since 1668 decides that she must be free of the chains laid on



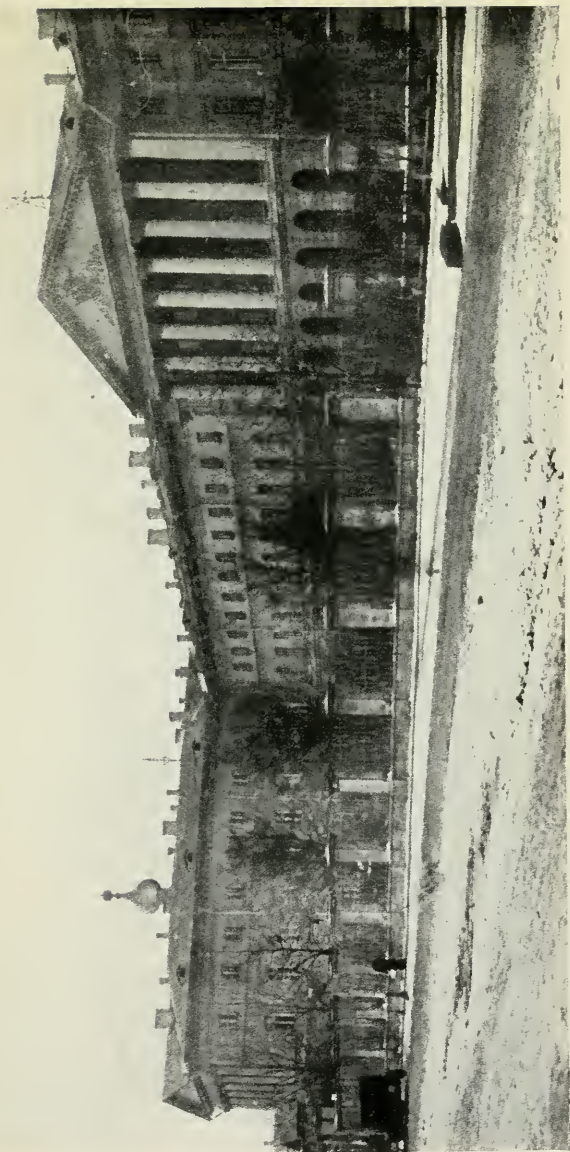
her by Peter the Great, the Government gladly acquiesces. Henceforth there is only the question of the State's guaranteeing the salaries of the bishops and priests. It is the Bolsheviks, however, who will do a thorough job by withdrawing all State support of religion, thereby obliging the clergy to look to their own people for support, as the clergy do here in America.

Local judges are made elective, trial by jury becomes the rule, and women are allowed to sit on juries and to serve as magistrates. Soldiers charged with offenses of a non-military character are no longer to be brought before courts-martial. Those accused of military offenses are to be tried before juries composed equally of officers and men.

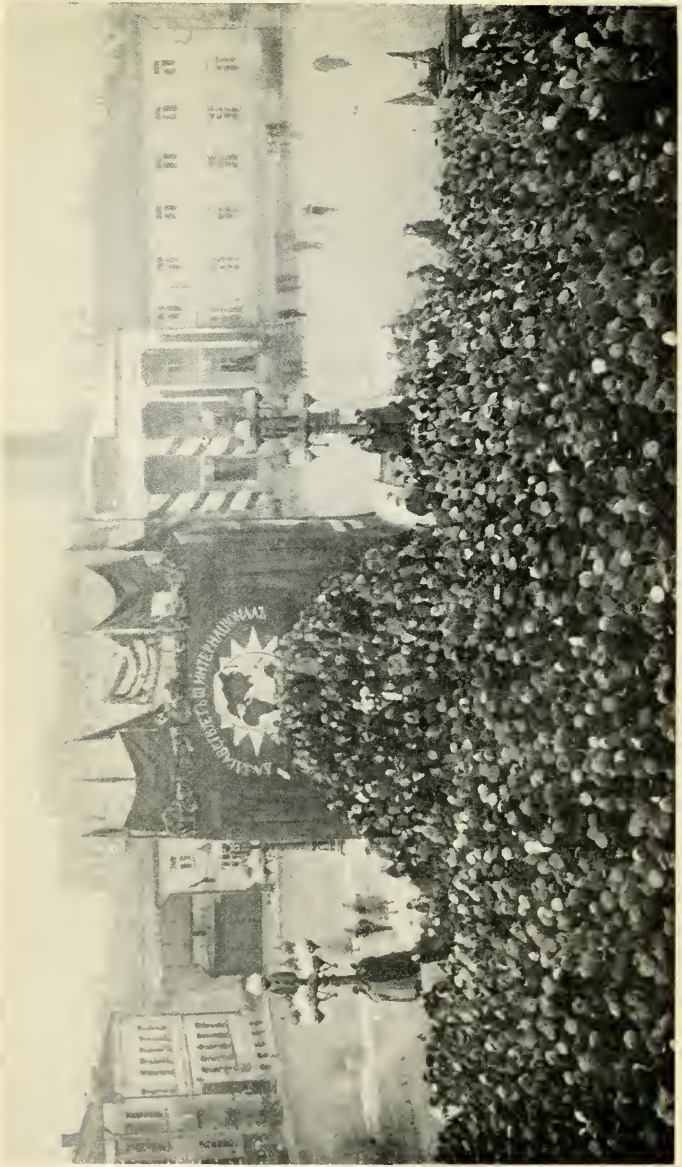
The base of municipal government is broadened by giving the vote to all instead of restricting it to the large property-owners. The *zemstvos*, or county and provincial councils, are thrown open to every citizen and *zemstvos* are instituted for units as small as the township. No longer shall the Government wield the police for its own political ends. Each city recruits and manages its police force just as ours do; hence there comes into existence a mild-mannered corps known as the "militia," under an elected chief. As for the much-dreaded *ispravnik*—district police commissioner—and *uriadnik*—rural policeman, they simply vanish from the scene and no successor appears. So in the country and the village old men step into the breach and strive by exercising their personal influence, or by directing public opinion, to restrain the unruly.

In the boots of the arbitrary and tyrannical gov-





Smolny Institute  
Headquarters of the Bolsheviks



May 1st, 1918  
"Long Live the Third International!"

ernor, who had the tsar back of him to his last Cossack, quakes now the county or provincial commissary, who is expected to carry out within his jurisdiction the will of the Central Government without bringing down upon himself the wrath of the local *duma* or *soviet*. Since the soldiers are in no mood to shoot down rebellious peasants or bulldozing strikers or riotous bread liners, the commissary has nothing to carry his point with unless it be argument, pleading, and tact.

Here at last, then, is the long-hoped-for freedom. It is sweet to all, but it is satisfying only to those in easy circumstances. To be sure, the oppression of privileged nationalities, religions, orders, and persons is done away with. But the humble man who must support his family on a ruble a day or from seven acres of ground—how will these reforms enable him to *live better*? The distribution of economic well-being is scarcely affected by them. What the socialists call *exploitation*—i. e., the power of the owner of land or capital to exact as rental for the use of this necessary instrument a large part of what the worker produces—is left undisturbed. After having forced fences and palings the toilers have overrun the orchards and gardens of the privileged; but now they stand before the high massive walls which enclose the citadel. Will they be able to breach the Rights of Property?

## CHAPTER IX

### ARMY ORDER NUMBER ONE

**I**T is autumn, 1920. On the dock at Sebastopol is a small group of distinguished anti-Bolshevik Russians, among them former War Minister Guchkov. They are there to see off Maklakov, ambassador of the Wrangel government to Paris. Appears now a certain Baranov, who goes around the circle shaking hands. Guchkov holds out his hand, but Baranov refuses it with the words, "To such scoundrels I do not give my hand." When Guchkov, controlling himself, asks his reason, Baranov replies: "For Order Number One, the ruin of the army, and the murder of the tsar. You may send your seconds, but remember I am acting in the name of all Russian officers."

Thus has Guchkov, a competent man, been pilloried before the world for a fatal document for which he is in no wise responsible.

The famous Order No. 1 which was issued before the Provisional Government had fairly been launched deserves a place among those documents which have bent the current of history. In all the annals of army administration it is impossible to meet its match. Here is the order in full:

March 14, 1917.

To the garrison of the Petrograd District, to all soldiers of the guards, army artillery, and fleet, for immediate and

accurate execution and for the information of the workingmen of Petrograd.

The Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates resolved:

1 In all companies, battalions, regiments, [aviation] parks, batteries, squadrons, and all branches of military and naval service, committees are to be chosen immediately from the elected representatives of the privates of the above-mentioned military units.

2 In all military units which have not as yet elected their representatives to the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates, one representative should be elected from each company. This representative is to come with written credentials to the building of the Duma at ten o'clock on the morning of the 15th of March.

3 In all their political actions, the military units are subject to the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates and their committees.

4 The orders of the Military Commission of the Duma must be executed, with the exception of those cases in which they contradict the decision of the Soviet of Workers' Delegates.

5 All kinds of arms, such as rifles, machine-guns and armored automobiles, etc., must be placed at the disposal and control of the company and battalion committees and *in no case* may they be issued to officers even at their demand.

6 During drill and during the execution of the duties of service, soldiers must maintain the strictest military discipline, but outside of service and drill, in their political, civic, and private life, soldiers must not be denied the rights which all citizens enjoy. In particular, standing at attention and compulsory saluting outside of service is abolished.

7 The honoring of officers is in the same manner abolished: "Your Excellency," "Your Honor," etc., are replaced by "Mr. General," "Mr. Colonel," etc.



The rude treatment of soldiers of any military rank—and in particular addressing them as “thou”—is forbidden; company committees must be informed regarding any violation of this, as well as of misunderstandings between officers and soldiers.

This order is to be read in all companies, battalions, regiments, ships' crews, batteries, and other combatant and non-combatant units.

[Signed] Petrograd Soviet of Soldiers' and Workers'  
Delegates

The genesis of this order appears to have been as follows: The revolting units of the Petrograd garrison have very good reason for not trusting their officers. They bivouac in the huge Tauride Palace, not only to protect the Duma, but to be protected by it. Thus Mrs. Williams testifies:

I asked the stalwart gallant Volynsky men whether they would return to their barracks for supper. The soldiers clustered closer round me and protested excitedly. “To the barracks? Oh, no! What for? The whole lot of us would be shot. We sha'n't move from the Duma. Here we 'll all remain, let them defend us here.”

As yet there was not much self-confidence in these troops, who from being tsarist had in a few hours become revolutionary.

To these anxious, rebellious soldiers the well-meant but indiscreet advice of Rodzianko is a cold douche. For in addressing the Preobrazhensky Guards who have come over to the side of the Duma he says: “I ask you to remain faithful to your officers and to have confidence in them. Return quietly to your barracks and come here at the first call when you may be required.”

Singular failure to enter into his hearers' state of mind!

Then, too, word runs among the soldiers that the officers are depriving the soldiers of their rifles, with the intention, of course, of having them arrested and shot later on. In fact, Colonel Engelhardt puts out a proclamation on March 14th to the effect that these rumors have been investigated and found to be baseless.

It is natural, then, that when, on the evening of March fourteenth, delegates elected by soldiers of twenty different units of the Petrograd garrison convene in the Tauride Palace to sit in the Soviet, they inform Colonel Engelhardt, chairman of the Military Commission, that they cannot trust their officers who did not take part in the revolutionary struggle, and they ask for an order authorizing the election of officers by companies, squadrons, batteries, and commands. Engelhardt submits the proposal to the Provisional Committee of the Duma and all its members, including Guchkov, oppose issuing such an order, considering it out of the question to solve in haste so serious a problem.

A little later comes a member of the Soviet in soldier's uniform and offers to assist in the preparation of an order which has for its purpose the regulation of relations between officers and soldiers on a new basis. After learning that the Provisional Committee judges such an order premature, he leaves saying: "So much the better; we will draft it ourselves."

Let Steklov now take up the tale. Speaking a month later when no one cares to claim the order as



his child, he says: "If among all the acts of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates there is one which was a true creation of the masses, then it is this Order Number One, prepared by soldiers' delegates who came from the street and from the revolutionary barracks. It was so much an act of creation of these masses, that the majority of the members of the Executive Committee, and among them those who at this time were carrying on negotiations with the Provisional Government, learned of this act after it was printed. The soldiers themselves prepared this act."

Army Order No. 1 is immediately printed and is made public on the afternoon of March 15th. Thousands of copies are sent by special agents to the soldiers all along the front. It thus reached them before it reached their officers, instead of being handed down by the staff through the channel of corps, division, brigade, regiment, etc! The effects are so alarming that two days later, on the initiative of the War Department, the Executive Committee causes to be prepared and issues Order No. 2, which explains that the right of each military unit to elect its committee does not imply the right to elect its officers. These committees, it is explained, are to be constituted not throughout the army, but only in the Petrograd garrison, in order that its representatives may share in the deliberations of the Petrograd Soviet and inform it as to the soldiers' views.

However, the fat is in the fire. It is too late to counteract the effects of Order No. 1. The privates in the trenches do not see any reason why they

should be denied privileges which have been extended to the men of the reserve regiments sitting safe and comfortable in the capital. So they create their committees and soviets, which not only look after the economic, social, and cultural welfare of the men but, setting aside the authority of the officers, presume to decide questions relating to military operations. The appalling results of these measures will be set forth in a later chapter.

## CHAPTER X

### THE CLOUD NO BIGGER THAN A MAN'S HAND

WE have seen the formation, out of a Duma expressly devised to insure the ascendancy of the propertied, of a Provisional Government composed with one exception of members of the bourgeois political groups. We have noted the springing up of soviets representing the huge working masses, who can never feel that the Duma or any government of its choosing represents *them*. What relation now must develop between these two bodies, one possessing all *legal* power, while the other possesses *de facto* power?

At the beginning the Duma Provisional Committee, and later the Provisional Government, taking the initiative, carries on negotiations with the Soviet leaders as with representatives of a co-equal body. In a radio to the world on March 18th the Provisional Government thus describes its early relation with the Soviet:

A serious complication arose due to the agitated state of the public mind and to the energetic activities of the political organization of the Left. The Provisional Committee, however, succeeded in entering into relations with the most influential of these organizations—the Soviet of Workers' Delegates, which was elected promptly by Petrograd factories and shops. The laboring population of Petrograd demonstrated a great degree of political wisdom,

and, realizing the danger which was threatening the capital and the country, on the night of the 14th of March it came to an agreement with the Provisional Committee of the Duma regarding the intended reforms and political activity of the latter, as well as its own support of the future government within the limits of political plans made public.

On the evening of the 15th, after prolonged discussion before an audience of a thousand workmen, the projects prepared by both sides received the approval of the great majority of all against fifteen. This accord promised to end finally the events on the streets of the capital which were severely condemned in the appeal issued by the Soviet of Workers' Delegates.

The appeal just referred to is couched in these terms:

Comrades and Citizens!

The new Government which is being organized from the moderate classes of society announced to-day the reforms which it promises to realize, partly during the process of the struggle with the old régime and partly upon the termination of this struggle. And among these reforms some must be welcomed by the wide democratic circles. Political amnesty, the obligation to take upon itself preparations for the Constituent Assembly, the realization of civic liberties, and the abolition of discrimination between nationalities. We trust that the democracy will support this new-born government in proportion to its fulfilment of these obligations and its determined struggle with the old government.

In wresting the nine-point program from the group of moderate bourgeois the Soviet bound itself in a certain measure and it promptly proceeds

to fulfill its obligations. On March 18th the Soviet calls upon the workers within its jurisdiction to return to work. It says:

Recognizing that the first onslaught of the rebellious people upon the old order has been crowned with success and has sufficiently secured the position of the working class in its revolutionary struggle, the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates considers it advisable now to resume work in the Petrograd district with the understanding that in case it shall be necessary to cease work again it shall be done at the first signal.

The continuation of strikes threatens to disorganize to a great degree the economic life of the country, already undermined by the old régime.

On March 21st through its executive committee the Soviet seeks to aid War Minister Guchkov in stemming the alarming tide of disobedience which is showing itself among the soldiers. After assuring the soldiers of the safety of the new régime it goes on to say:

Only internal strife in the army can interfere with the preservation of freedom. Differences between officers and soldiers also threaten our freedom, and it is the duty of all citizens to assist in adjusting the relations between the soldiers and those officers who have recognized the new order in Russia. And we are appealing to the officers, asking them to respect the personality of the citizen soldiers in their relations on duty and off duty.

Hoping that the officers will heed our appeal, we appeal to the soldiers to execute their military duties strictly at the front and during the time they are on duty.

At the same time the committee informs the armies at

the front that Orders No. 1 and No. 2 concern only the soldiers of the Petrograd district, as is stated in the titles of these orders. As to the armies at the front, the War Minister promises to prepare immediately, with the aid of the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates, new rules for the relations of the soldiers and the command.

One may wonder why this self-conscious and energetic "revolutionary democracy" did not itself create a government for Russia instead of leaving the initiative to a body so unrepresentative as the Duma. One reason is that at the moment the decision had to be made there was no assurance that the Revolution would be successful. The tsar's ministers were still at large and no one knew what would be the attitude of the garrison at Tsarskoe Selo or of the troops at the front toward the overturn in the capital. Since there was less risk in a legal body like the Duma taking steps to restore order, it was allowed to take the lead.

It was felt, too, that the revolutionists were not yet strong enough to undertake the exceedingly complicated task of organizing the State. Moreover, as *Izvestia*, the Soviet organ, remarks in an editorial on March 15th:

Every mistake of the government created by the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates would be skilfully used by the reactionaries; they could without difficulty develop dissatisfaction among the backward elements of the armed and unarmed people and thus would prepare the legions of the counter-revolutionary army. And no matter how bravely our revolutionary soldiers might fight in the



struggle with this black army, if in a decisive moment they were deserted by their officers, they would inevitably be defeated.

Again, the Soviet leaders were reluctant to take upon their shoulders the burden of conducting the Government, because they wished to be free to devote themselves to preparing the people for the election of the Constituent Assembly which was expected to take place within three or four months.

In this ill-assorted marriage of the bourgeois Ministry with the democratic Soviet it is not long before "incompatibility" begins to show itself.

On March 22d Prince Lvov gives out the statement:

The question of the fate of Nicholas was discussed at the meeting of the Council of Ministers yesterday. The majority is in favor of sending the former tsar with his entire family to England. The question of the necessity of removing the Dynasty from Russian territory had no opposition. No final decision was reached yesterday.

The sequel appears from the report of Sokolov to the Soviet next day:

It became known yesterday that the Provisional Government had agreed to the departure of Nicholas II to England and it had entered into negotiations with the British Government without obtaining our consent to do so and without even informing the Executive Committee. We then found it necessary to act independently; we mobilized all the military forces that were under our influence and so brought it to pass that Nicholas II could not leave Tsarskoe Selo without our consent; we sent telegrams to all railroads re-

questing every railroad organization, every station-master, every group of railroad workers to detain the train on which Nicholas II is carried, no matter where that train would be and no matter when he would be traveling. Then we sent our commissaries to the station of the Tsarskoe Selo and to Tsarskoe Selo itself and with them we sent a sufficient number of military forces to surround the Palace with a dense ring of infantry, armored automobiles, and machine guns. By so executing our will we practically placed Nicholas II in a position where it was impossible for him to leave. We entered into negotiations with the Provisional Government which at first was reluctant, but in the end it was obliged to sanction everything that we did, and so the former Emperor is at the present time not only under our guardianship but also under the guardianship of the Provisional Government.

The Soviet promptly approved the very energetic action of its executive committee.

The army high command contained many generals hostile in their hearts to the new order and not always did they succeed in cloaking their enmity. On March 16th the new commander-in-chief issued an order from headquarters declaring that there are appearing from Petrograd "purely revolutionary licentious gangs who are attempting to disarm gendarmes on railroads." He directed to intercept them and not to disperse them, but to capture them and try them by a court martial, "whose sentences should be carried out on the spot." Inasmuch as these "gangs" were bands of revolutionists sent out in good faith by the Petrograd Soviet to disarm the tsarist railway gendarmes in order to make them powerless to harm the new régime, General Alexiev's order to have them shot or hanged

forthwith after trial by court martial was a slap in the face of the Revolution.

Similar irritants were the order of General Radko-Dmitriev which threatened with field court martial soldiers who refused to salute officers, and the order of General Evert, who on March 19th not only recognized Grand Duke Nicholas as commander-in-chief, although the Government had informed the front that it did not recognize him as such, but also, even after the abdication of Nicholas II and Michael, ordered his troops to support the throne of the Romanovs. Then there was the treatment of General Ivanov, who actually started from the front with eight hundred "St. George's cavaliers" to crush revolutionary Petrograd. After a considerable period of immunity he was arrested at the instance of the Soviet of Kiev, but was released by Kerensky on giving his word to be faithful to the Provisional Government. Stung by criticism of his action in this case and of his attitude toward members of the tsar's family, Kerensky appeared before the Petrograd Soviet, where his eloquence confounded his critics and gained him a great ovation.

The fact is, the higher officers and the general staff of the army are full of anti-revolutionary sentiment. This does not greatly worry Guchkov and his colleagues, who are more interested in winning the war than in keeping the Revolution, and who are in no personal danger from a successful counter-revolution. But it *does* worry the working-class leaders, who stand in far greater peril from the tsar than from the kaiser. Every one of them

knows there is a noose about his own neck. They remember how in 1905 they thought they had a revolution when through October and November autocracy was well nigh impotent. But the cruel beast "came back" and took fearful vengeance for the mortifications it had suffered. In the words of Olgin: <sup>1</sup>

The government began a series of arrests. It imprisoned those who belonged to a revolutionary organization; it imprisoned those who had addressed meetings or led demonstrations in the "days of freedom" (October and November); it imprisoned the strike-committees and all those who attended conferences, conventions, or councils of workingmen, of peasants, of professionals, of railroad employees; it imprisoned writers, reporters, editors of newspapers, preachers, soldiers, officers. It imprisoned every one whom it suspected of having given aid and comfort to its enemies. It filled all the prisons beyond their capacity; it sent tens of thousands to Siberia; it rented special houses to serve as prisons. It established courts-martial all over the country to try the most serious offenders, and the sentence was usually death, death, death.

This spirit of personal vengeance characterized the punitive actions of the administration after the December rebellions. The court-martial was prejudiced against the defendants. The administrative courts (if courts they could be called) did not care to distinguish between innocent and guilty. The system of imprisoning persons pending the investigation of the causes of their arrest again became prevalent. Between October, 1905, and April, 1906, the number of persons imprisoned or sent to Siberia by order of the administration, in the majority of cases without any trial, amounted to *seventy thousand*. Nearly

<sup>1</sup> *The Soul of the Russian Revolution*, pp. 160-162.

every morning a number of men, women and young boys were hanged. The number of executed became a regular news item in the papers.

More vicious even than the court-martial were the *punitive expeditions*. Those were army units sent under the command of a general or a colonel to punish the population of an entire district or a province or a city where the revolutionary outbursts or the peasant revolts had been strongest.

It is not easy for bourgeois ministers, who sought only to replace a government which had fallen without complicity on their part, to allow for the desperate anxiety of the popular leaders regarding counter-revolutionaries. Quite naturally they shrink from taking any step which might later cost them their lives, while the Soviet chiefs are bent on forcing the ministers to do things which will irrevocably commit them to the Revolution.

This is why the indulgence shown the onhangers of the fallen autocrat is sharply resented. On April 10th *Izvestia* remarks:

One would expect that the principal bulwark of reaction—the existing Imperial Council—would have ended during the first days of the revolution. In reality, this Council not only exists but it blooms, supported by the people's money.

A few days ago all the "unemployed" members of this Council by appointment received their monthly thousand rubles salary for March, which money, as usual, was delivered to their homes by messengers. Is it possible that the Provisional Government sincerely believes that the reaction was supported by policemen, and not by these pillars of reaction who had their special purpose, and the majority

of whom deserve imprisonment and not reward from the people's treasury?

It would seem that with their master gone they also would be removed and justly denied payments of money. The reality, however, proves to be quite the opposite. In this regard everything remains unchanged.

Another instance of undue tenderness for the higher parasites of the court was the allowance of a pension for Count Fredericks, "Minister of the Imperial Court, Commander of the Imperial Headquarters, Member of the Imperial Council, General of Cavalry," etc.

The Soviet, however, is culpable of wanton encroachment. On March 21st its executive committee promulgates an order suppressing certain "black hundred" newspapers and informing publishers that without a special permit the publication of newspapers and periodicals is not permitted. This high-handed policy rouses such a storm of protest that two days later the censorship order is withdrawn.

The difficulty of inducing the Government to give effect to the developing will of the masses is well brought out in Steklov's report before the All-Russian Conference of Soviets on April 12th. It is a résumé of nearly a month of experience.

From time to time we met and carried on desultory conversations, until the situation convinced us that it was necessary to create a permanent organ of coöperation to influence the Government. We were brought to this decision largely by the activities of the War Minister (Guchkov) who up to this very day inspires us, and perhaps you as well, with the greatest concern. And so the Executive



Committee resolved to create a delegation which would always inform the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates of the intentions and plans of the Government, and would inform the Government regarding the demands of the revolutionary people; would bring pressure to bear upon the Government and would control the actual execution of our demands! At the same time the Executive Committee considered it necessary to adopt that measure which the situation itself virtually presented to us: several departments of the government requested us to delegate to them commissaries who would right then and there express the will of the people, that would sanction this will in legislative form. First of all our provisioning organs appeared, then representatives of the Ministry of Commerce. But few of the ministers came readily to meet us, and we decided to give a push to the good will of those who did not come and to take upon ourselves the initiative by sending our commissaries to their departments. First of all we sent a special delegation to the War Minister for the purpose of establishing normal relations and control over the actions of this Ministry. Verbally he was ready to meet our wishes and promised to prepare an agreement with us about new conditions for relations between the commanders and the soldiers at the front, but after once unexpectedly absenting himself from the conferences, the War Minister since then has not taken any steps to renew this conference and evades it in every possible manner. Until recently he did not appear at those general meetings of the Council of Ministers to which we came with our statements and demands, and I must say that three quarters of the issues which we have to bring before the Provisional Government concern the War Ministry.

At its meeting on March 23d the Soviet approves the proposal of its executive committee that a Control Commission of five be created "to enter im-

mediately into relation with the Provisional Government in order to learn whether or not it will permit permanent control by the Soviet."

It is not long before thinking men scent danger in the disposition of the Soviet to regard itself as in some respects coördinate with the Provisional Government. Protest is voiced against "dual authority" and the central committee of the Cadet party repeatedly remonstrates with the Soviet for usurping the prerogatives of the Government. *Izvestia* counters by reminding the Cadets of how in days of the First Duma, eleven years ago, when the Duma attempted to subject the irresponsible bureaucracy to its control as now the Soviet attempts to subject an irresponsible Provisional Government to its control, the "black hundred" group used to reply: "The Duma attempts to create dual authority—which means chaos." And *Izvestia* goes on to say (April 11th):

Those groups that are in power have always insisted that the power should belong to them alone. The groups that have ruled the country have always been inclined to see in every attempt of the wider classes of the population to establish control over them, an assault on their rights. And against these assaults they always bring out the scare of dual authority and anarchy.

A fortnight later it parries the charge with more fierceness:

If we are to believe the bourgeois papers, then Russia is at the edge of an abyss, due to the "fatal dual authority."

The cause of such a change of position by the bourgeois

press is obvious. Before the revolution the authority was in the hands of a small group of the largest landowners and bureaucrats, with the Czar at the head and with a whole legion of all kinds of "Pharaohs" below. Now authority has passed into the hands of the representatives of the bourgeoisie, and it stubbornly struggles against any attempts to limit its authority.

All these cries of "dual authority" are nothing but a struggle of the bourgeoisie for complete authority. The issue is not that it is necessary to have a "single authority," but that all authority should be exclusively in the hands of the bourgeoisie.

Only the bourgeois newspapers prate about "dual authority." Only representatives of the ruling classes and the officers speak about it. The press of the Left parties and all organizations of the working classes do not complain about it.

The ruling classes are dissatisfied because the Provisional Government takes into account the opinion of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates. They do not care to allow the laboring classes to have a hand in the affairs of state.

And two days later occurs a portent. The workers of the "Stary Parvaianen" factory, 2500 in number, hold a meeting at which after discussion it is resolved among other things:

To demand the removal of the Provisional Government, which serves only as a brake to the cause of the revolution, and to transfer authority to the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates;

The Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates which was started by the revolutionary proletariat must end this war which has brought profit only to capitalists and landowners and which weakens the forces of the revolutionary people;

To organize a Red Guard and to arm all the people ;

To requisition the printing shops of all the bourgeois newspapers which are carrying on a campaign against the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates and against the labor press, and to turn over these printing shops to labor newspapers.

To carry out the immediate seizure of landowners', crown, and monastery lands, and to transfer the tools of production into the hands of the workers.

Verily, the returned political exiles are beginning to make a difference. These fierce demands create scandal and call forth protest ; but, for all that, the workers of Stary Parvaianen will have their day.

## CHAPTER XI

### LENIN AND HIS SLOGAN

**W**ITHIN five weeks of the downfall of the old régime arrives on the scene the man destined to give the Revolution a slant that few anticipated. This is Nicholas Lenin (Vladimir Ilyitch Ulianov) the master mind of the Bolshevik or extremist wing of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party. That Lenin is by no means a nobody appears from the following account of his reception which appears in *Izvestia*, the bulletin of the Petrograd Soviet, at this time controlled by the political opponents of the Bolsheviks.

Quite unexpectedly on the 16th of April a telegram was received by the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates that a large group of immigrants is returning from abroad and that among them is N. Lenin (V. I. Ulianov). This news created a good deal of excitement among the Social Democrats and it was immediately decided to organize a welcoming party for the guests. The Executive Committee resolved to greet Lenin through a special deputation. The presidium of the All-Russian Conference also sent its delegation. Then, too, the Petersburg Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor party immediately began to organize a welcome. The time of the arrival was inopportune, for the holiday prevented information of the arrival reaching the masses of the proletariat. There were no newspapers and the workingmen's districts had to be informed by mes-

sengers. In spite of the fact that the organizers of the welcome had only twelve hours in which to make preparations, the news of the arrival of Lenin and other comrades spread swiftly throughout Petrograd, and made a stir. Military units upon being informed of the arrival immediately issued orders to send out companies as a guard of honor to the Finnish Station. Informed by telephone of Lenin's arrival the Kronstadt sailors immediately replied that, in spite of the fact that it was the time for the going out of the ice, they will make their way on an ice-breaker to Petrograd and will send their guard of honor and an orchestra. As early as seven o'clock in the evening representatives of various organizations and districts began to arrive at the Finnish Station, and by ten o'clock the entire square in front of the station was thickly packed by battalions of the labor army while the station itself was filled with the guards of honor of the troops and with deputations with banners.

The Central Committee of the Petersburg Social Democrats arrived with their banners, together with the writers of the "Pravda," and masses of workers and soldiers gathered near the Palace of Kshesinskaya where the Petersburg Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party is located. At the van of the demonstrators rolled an armored automobile decorated with the banner of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party. The train arrived at 11:10. Lenin came out and was greeted by friends and comrades who assist him in party work. Under the banner of the party he walked along the station while the troops stood at attention to the sounds of the Marseillaise. A naval officer who was escorting Lenin accompanied him along a detachment of sailors where Lenin made his first speech in free Russia to revolutionary troops. All down the line of troops which stood in orderly formation along the entire platform as well as by the labor militia Lenin was greeted enthusiastically. In the reception rooms of



the station he was greeted by deputations and among them by the representative of the Executive Committee, N. S. Tcheidze. Finally Lenin came out on the square illuminated by search-lights. The entire sea of heads began to move. Swaying banners and huge crowds, crying "Hurrah!" greeted the arrival of the old soldier of the revolution. The people demanded that he make a speech. Lenin stood up on an automobile and silence reigned in the square while he made his first speech to the revolutionary proletariat of Petrograd. Then the armored car division took Lenin on one of its cars and moving slowly and surrounded by a crowd of many thousands he left for the headquarters of the Petersburg Committee.

In front of the building of the Petersburg Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party a tremendous crowd of people were waiting and here from a balcony Lenin had to speak three times. Here he was greeted by the Polish delegation of Social Democrats who added their banner to the banners of the revolutionary social democracy.

At the headquarters of the Petersburg Committee a large, solemn meeting of the representatives of the districts of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party of Petersburg, Kronstadt and the vicinity, took place. The celebration lasted until four o'clock in the morning when the workers of the revolutionary social democracy left for their homes.

The party in which Lenin returned to Russia *via* Germany comprised thirty-two Russian immigrants of whom nineteen were Bolsheviki. Inasmuch as the British Government would not allow them to return to their country by routes which it controlled, Martov, who is no Bolshevik, suggested that they try to procure a passage through Germany in exchange for German and Austrian prisoners of war

interned in Russia. The idea was acted upon and a written agreement was drawn up between the Swiss Socialist Internationalist Fritz Platten, and the German Minister in Switzerland. Its principal points were:

(1) All immigrants may travel regardless of their views on the war.

(2) The car in which the immigrants are to travel has the right of ex-territoriality (nobody has the right to enter the car without Platten's permission). There must be no control of passports or baggage. Travelers agree to use their influence in Russia to bring about the release of a corresponding number of Austrian and German interned subjects.

The car was escorted throughout the entire journey by Platten and its inmates frustrated all attempts of the German Majority Socialists to get into communication with them.

Lenin is the son of a school principal belonging to the nobility of the Province of Simbirsk. When he was sixteen years of age an ineffaceable impression was made on his mind by the hanging of his noble-minded elder brother Alexander for being implicated in a student bomb plot against the life of tsar Alexander III. He took up the study of law in Kazan University but was presently expelled for preaching socialism among his fellow students. He removed to Petrograd and tried to build up the Social-Democratic Party among the workingmen. Arrested in 1895, he was banished to Siberia after spending two years in prison. Having finished his term of exile, he lived abroad in Switzerland,

founded a newspaper ("The Spark") and a magazine ("The Dawn"), and published a number of serious books, viz., "The Development of Capitalism in Russia," "The Agrarian Question," "Materialism and Empirocracy," "Imperialism," and "During Twelve Years." He was an ardent lover of books, worked twelve or fifteen hours a day in libraries, and achieved such solid learning that in Paris the great Russian scholar Kovalevsky exclaimed: "What a fine professor might have been made out of Lenin!" Twenty years ago there was extreme disagreement among Russian revolutionists as to what ought to be done once the old system was smashed. Many insisted there must be a "liberal" period of ascendancy by the propertied (bourgeoisie) before Russia would be ready to become a socialist commonwealth. Lenin, however, contended that the right course is not to stop with a bourgeois republic but to push straight through to working-class domination. It was he who injected this issue into the convention of the Russian Social Democrats in 1903 and split the party into Mensheviks and Bolsheviks.

Lenin was back in Petrograd in 1905 and from a balcony, high up and unperceived by the public, watched the proceedings of the Petrograd Soviet. Perhaps here, looking down on this first labor parliament, the idea of the Soviet State dawned upon him. In the Soviet he did not see a mere union of laborers for winning better wages and hours or even the proletariat's watch-dog over a bourgeois government. He saw it as the engine by which the workers could wrest control from the capitalists and make them-

selves masters of society. He had to go into exile again in 1907 and lived amid poverty and discouragement until in 1912 the Russian labor movement began to pick up. Then he migrated to Cracow in Galicia in order to be in close touch with his party friends and followers in Russia.

No sooner is Lenin back in Petrograd in April, 1917, than he sets afoot a vigorous propaganda. The handsome villa of the ballet-dancer Kshesinskaya on the fashionable Kameno-Ostrovski Prospekt, which has been abandoned by its owner in the first days of the Revolution, is "requisitioned" as the Bolshevik headquarters. Daily from a kiosk in the garden speeches are delivered to crowds of workmen in the street on the other side of the palings.

So long as Russia was tsarist, Lenin was a *defeatist*. He wrote: "We Russians are for the defeat of Russia, since that would facilitate her internal enfranchisement, her liberation from the fetters of tsarism." Trotsky, on the other hand, rightly argued in October, 1914, that the defeat of the tsar, while strengthening revolution in Russia, would weaken it elsewhere. "In Germany the transformation which began with the capitulation of the proletarian party to militarist nationalism would be hastened, the working class there would fatten on the crumbs which fell from the table of triumphant imperialism, and social revolution would be struck to the heart."

In his first appearance before the Petrograd Soviet Lenin declares:

"It is being said that I am a partisan of a separate peace. I declare that this is slander. I am only

saying that the war, which was begun by the capitalists of the whole world and Nicholas Romanov, is being carried on by our government, which also consists entirely of capitalists. The working class does not need the war. Therefore, why not publish the secret treaties and the diplomatic documents of the capitalistic governments? We will not succeed in ending the war so long as we have a capitalistic government. The war can be ended only by a labor revolution of the whole world, which we are advocating. Otherwise this snarl cannot be disentangled and humanity cannot be freed from it."

Lenin is a *Marxian socialist*. He believes that the substitution, within the last century and a half, of machine industry for the old system of handiwork industry, such as we still see in China or India, opened a new stage in the development of society. Production by the aid of machinery—i. e., *capitalistic industry*—has not only triumphed over the handicrafts, but constantly industry becomes *more capitalistic*. Constantly the rôle of the worker becomes less and the rôle of mechanism becomes greater. As this occurs, the larger is the proportion of the whole output that goes as the share of the owners of capital. Thus there is forming in all societies with modern industry a distinct capitalist class, which *does* nothing whatever in production but which, in virtue of its ownership of the means of production, claims more and more of all wealth produced and wields more and more social power. The getting rid of this kept class, by the substitution of community ownership of the means of production for private ownership, constitutes the "so-

cial revolution" which the Marxians are trying to bring about. It is to be borne in mind that collective ownership of factories, smelters, mines, oil-wells, means of transport, shops, etc., does not call for "community of goods" in the old sense of goods for consumption, nor for equality of the incomes received by the workers, nor for the all-round dedication of the individual to the service of the community, as the ante-Marxian communistic proposals were apt to do.

Lenin is not only a socialist; he is an *internationalist*. To him the opposition between nations means very little; the thing of real consequence is the opposition between classes. The bourgeoisie own the capital by means of which they "exploit" the great majority of the workers. Relief can come only by substituting *public capitalism* (i. e., *collectivism*, or *communism*) for *private capitalism*. This fundamental change (revolution) will never come of itself nor by the conversion of the bourgeoisie, or a part of them, to Communism. It will come, if it comes at all, only by the revolutionary efforts of the class-conscious workers. Of its own will the kept class will never give up its privileged position of living without work in virtue of its ownership of the means of production. This means that it must be dispossessed by *force*.

Lenin insists upon the necessity of a *dictatorship of the proletariat* during the transition process from the old order to the new order. Of what use is it that public bodies should be made up partly of representatives of the workers and partly of the representatives of the kept classes? No amount of discus-



sion will bring them into agreement. Compromise will but disappoint both sides, for each would have to give up a part of what it considers essential. While the kept class is in process of being ousted from its privileged position no common purpose is possible to the two elements. Between them there can be nothing but a trial of strength. How foolish it is, then, for the proletariat to admit to its governing bodies representatives of the enemy class, the bourgeoisie, to spy upon, trick, confuse, and corrupt them?

In the rapid formation of soviets of workers and soldiers in all the towns of Russia and in the unity of purpose and of interconnection among these soviets, Lenin sees the shaping of an instrument whereby the dictatorship of the proletariat may be realized. He therefore wishes to wipe out the existing governing bodies, municipal dumas, district and provisional zemstvos, and the Provisional Government, substituting for them a hierarchy of soviets culminating in the Executive Committee of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets. So from his first arrival in Petrograd he sounds the slogan "All power to the soviets!"

He opposes the Provisional Government because a group of bourgeoisie will never consent to actions which will destroy the economic foundations of their class. He insists likewise that a coalition government will disappoint expectations and points out that in such ministries the Socialists always come to support bourgeois policies. He is not even in favor of an all-Socialist government because, in relation to those who want to introduce community owner-

ship of capital *now*, those who, like the Menshevik Social Democrats, want it not now but in some indefinite future time, will behave the same as non-Socialists. So he labors to disseminate his ideas through the mass of toilers in order to build up in the soviets a Bolshevik majority which will institute a Bolshevik government.

Lenin visualizes two stages in the Revolution. During the first stage the revolutionary proletariat in alliance with the whole peasantry, which he considers as still dominated by its upper stratum, the *kulaks* or rich peasants, abolishes by force the power of the landed gentry and the industrial bourgeoisie. It is with the latter than Lenin's Menshevik opponents would ally themselves. During the second stage the proletariat, this time in alliance with the poorest peasantry (those who, having little or no land, have to hire out), overthrows the power of the employing peasantry. The proletarian revolution is then complete.

One should remember that Lenin is *not an anarchist*. Before the Petrograd Soviet he stated in April:

“We do not need such a republic as exists in other countries, a republic with functionaries, police, and a permanent army. I consider that our Provisional Government emanates from the capitalists. I will be asked: ‘Therefore you are against government?’ No, this is slander. On the contrary, a government is necessary, but it must be the firmest revolutionary government.”

Interesting in this connection is the protest published in the *Bourse Gazette* of May 1st by the Petro-

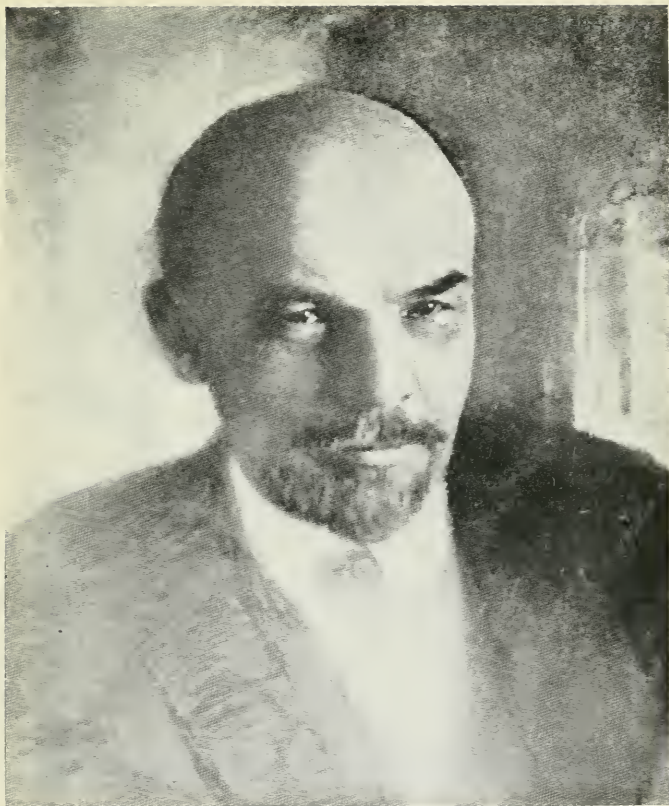
grad Club of Anarchists, complaining that Lenin's ideas have been confounded with anarchism. The club says:

We consider it necessary to state that while Lenin calls himself a Communist, he does not break with either state socialism nor with social democracy, and therefore he is absolutely foreign to anarchism; his demagogic actions are not acceptable to us. Besides this, while we do not presume to accuse Lenin of insincerity, many anarchists have taken a negative stand on Lenin's trip through Germany, calling it an unsuccessful demonstration.

Once more we protest against the vulgar understanding of anarchism and against the confounding of Lenin's name with the name of anarchy, which is dear to us.

We request other newspapers to reprint this.

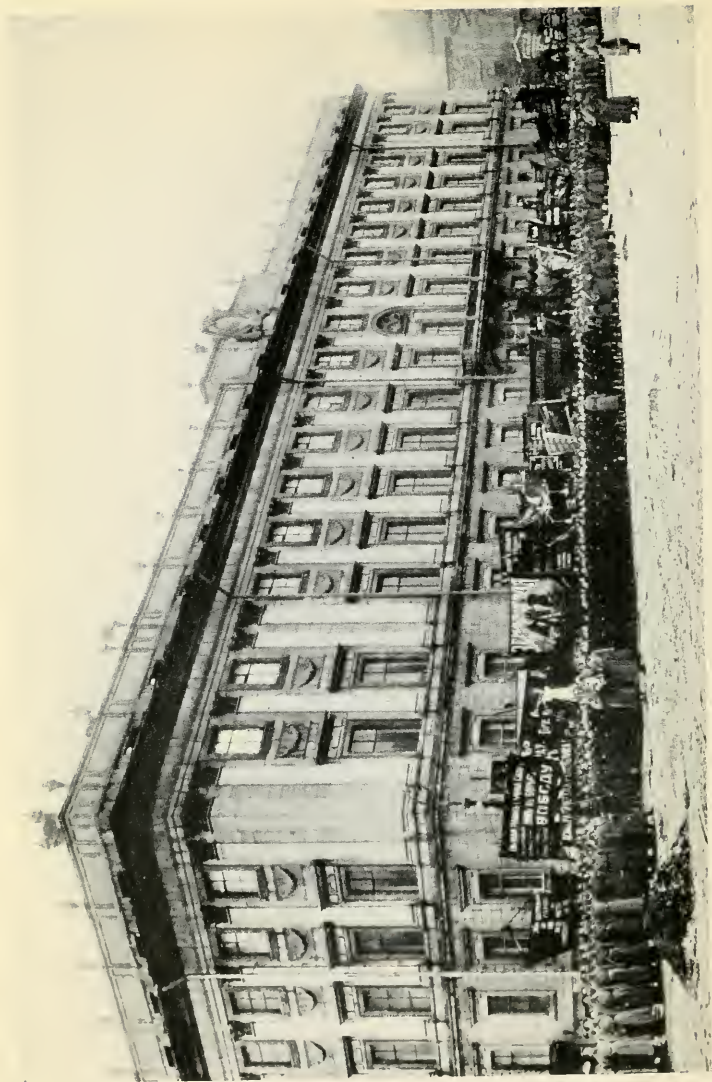
Such are the doctrines now cast like a new ferment into the minds of the Russian workers and soldiers. This is not the place to pronounce upon them or their author. History will do that.



Nikolai Lenin

(V. Oulianoff)

Prime Minister of the Soviet Government



May Day demonstration in front of the Marble Palace  
(Now occupied by the Commissariat of Labor)



## CHAPTER XII

### THE MAY CRISIS

**A** COMPLETE contradiction exists between the bourgeois theory of the war and the socialist theory and hardly has the first flush of the Revolution passed before this brings about a startling confrontation of opposed social classes. According to the bourgeois theory, Germany and Austria, aspiring to world domination, are trying to subjugate the free democracies of Europe: England, France, and Belgium. To assure them of future security it is necessary for the Allies to win a "complete victory." According to the Socialists the war is a result of the competition of the ruling classes in England, France, and Russia, on the one hand, in Germany and Austria on the other, who are aiming to conquer and subjugate foreign lands and peoples. In the course of the last twenty or thirty years these attempts became more and more apparent and, as neither side wished to yield to the other, both sides industriously increased their armaments. Owing to the growth of armaments since the Russo-Japanese War and the stubbornness of both sides there were several occasions before 1914 when there was danger of the war breaking out. Just on the eve of this war, in the spring of 1914, Russia had undertaken a military program calling for a huge increase of her forces. It was chiefly this that precipitated the



conflict. Germany and Austria could not afford to postpone the war lest Russia should be able to carry out her great military program.

In Russia it is considered indisputable that the Austro-German coalition aims at conquest; but like aims have been displayed during the war by Russia and her allies. From the Russian side statements have been made regarding the intention of obtaining Constantinople, the Dardanelles, Galicia, Armenia, and reannexing Poland, which is being liberated. The British imperialists occupy and wish to retain possession of the German colonies and intend to take Mesopotamia. The French demand Alsace-Lorraine and German territory to the Rhine, also Syria and a part of Asia Minor. Italy is trying to get the Tyrol and Trentino and several districts in the Balkans, while all the Allies wish to dismember Austria and the Balkans in order to subjugate them.

The Chauvinists of each side call the realization of all these aims of conquest a "complete victory over the enemy."

The Socialists deem the time ripe for attacking the predatory tendencies of the governments of all countries. On March 27th the Petrograd Soviet issues a proclamation to "Comrade proletarians and all laboring people of all countries," declaring that

the time has come to start a decisive struggle against the intentions of conquest on the part of the governments of all countries; the time has come for the peoples to take into their own hands the decision of the question of war and peace.

Conscious of its revolutionary power, the Russian democracy announces that it will, by every means, resist the policy

of conquest of its ruling classes, and it calls upon the peoples of Europe for concerted decisive actions in favor of peace.

And we are appealing to our brother-proletarians of the Austro-German coalition and first of all to the German proletariat. From the first days of the war you were assured that by raising arms against autocratic Russia, you were defending the culture of Europe from Asiatic despotism. Many of you saw in this a justification of that support which you were giving to the war. Now even this justification is gone: democratic Russia cannot be a threat to liberty and civilization.

. . . . Throw off the yoke of your semi-autocratic rulers in the same way that the Russian people shook off the Czar's autocracy; refuse to serve as an instrument of conquest and violence in the hands of kings, landowners, and bankers—and by coördinated efforts we will stop the horrible butchery, which is disgracing humanity and is beclouding the great days of the birth of Russian freedom.

Laboring people of all countries: We are stretching out our hands to you in brotherly fashion over the mountains of corpses of our brothers, across rivers of innocent blood and tears, over the smoking ruins of cities and villages, over the wreckage of the treasures of culture; we appeal to you for the reestablishment and strengthening of international unity. That will be the security for our future victories and the complete liberation of humanity.

Proletarians of all countries, unite!

On April 9th the reluctant Government finds itself obliged to do homage to the Socialist formula for ending the war. In an appeal to the citizens of Russia to rally to the defense of their country against the Germans it says:

While leaving to the decision of the people, in close unity

with our Allies, the final solution of all problems connected with the World War and its ending, the Provisional Government considers it its right and duty to state now that the aim of Free Russia is not the domination of other peoples, the depriving them of their national patrimony, nor the violent seizure of foreign territories, but that its object is to establish a durable peace on the basis of the self-determination of peoples.

This declaration, endorsed by the Soviet, is, of course, ambiguous in that "close unity with our Allies" may not be at all compatible with "the aim of Free Russia."

Miliukov, however, is conducting the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on a very different theory. He considers it of great importance to Russia's economic life that her access to the ocean through the Black Sea should no longer be controlled by the barbarous Turk. That her southern gateway to the world's highways should come into her possession is in the interest of her peasants and workers as well as in the interest of her bourgeoisie. In 1911 Turkey was at war with Italy; the Straits were closed and the peasants of South Russia could not export their wheat. In the Balkan Wars, 1912 and 1913, Turkey was again a combatant and again grain export was held up. So Miliukov is right, but he does not perceive that the war-weariness of the masses has reached such a pitch that it is too late now to hope for any gains from the war. Quite misreading political forces, he takes a step which fatally weakens the Provisional Government with the people.

The Soviet distrusts Miliukov, and with reason. On April 22d he tells the correspondent of the *Man-*

*chester Guardian*, "Russia must receive the sovereignty of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles and must be given an opportunity to fortify them." Promptly Skobelev, Vice-Chairman of the Soviet, telegraphs the press of foreign countries: "Russian democracy has nothing in common with the aims proclaimed by Miliukov." War Minister Guchkov having declared at Jassy that he is against "ending the war without victory," Skobelev telegraphs the press of the world that "the revolutionary people and the revolutionary army . . . are for the ending of the war without any annexations or indemnities and will not retreat from this decision."

Pressure is brought to bear on the Provisional Government to force it to communicate its new attitude on the war to the Allied governments with the request that they consent to a revision of the treaties between themselves and Russia in the spirit of "no annexations or indemnities." Otherwise the Soviet will not support the Liberty Loan campaign which must soon be launched. Miliukov refuses to call for a revision of the treaties but consents to transmit to the Allied governments the Manifesto of April 9th with a covering note. The preparation of this note is kept secret. Although it is agreed to by the entire Cabinet, nothing is said of it to the Soviet leaders and only four days before the note is sent the Provisional Government causes to be printed in its *Messenger* a flat denial of the statement published in the *Bourse Gazette* of April 26th to the effect that a note regarding the aims and objects of the war is being prepared and is soon to be sent to the Allied powers. Why should the Pro-

visional Government thus prevaricate unless it intended to betray the democracy and then confront its leaders with a *fait accompli*?

In this note, which bears the date of May 1st, Miliukov assures the Allies that the Revolution will not entail "any slackening on the part of Russia in the common struggle of all the Allies. On the contrary, the nation's determination to bring the World War to a decisive victory has been accentuated, owing to the sense of responsibility which is shared by all in common and each one of us in particular." He promises that Russia "will maintain a strict regard for its agreements with the Allies" and closes with an expression of the hope that "the Allied Democracies will find means of establishing the guarantees and sanctions necessary to prevent any recourse to sanguinary war in the future."

The storm breaks when on May 2d the note is published. The executive committee of the Soviet is speedily convened in order to discuss it and the debate lasts from midnight until half-past three o'clock in the morning. Soviet leaders are indignant at the reappearance of such phrases as "decisive victory" and "guarantees and sanctions," which may be used to cloak any kind of "imperialistic" designs and are, in fact, intended to screen Miliukov's determination that Russia shall have Constantinople and the Straits. At a session the next day the executive committee decides to find out directly from the Provisional Government its motives in adopting the text of the note. On being approached, Prince Lvov agrees and accordingly a joint meeting of the Cabinet, the executive committee

of the Soviet, and the provisional committee of the Duma is called for the evening. Meanwhile, however, a sudden flare-up reveals how far class and mass have gone asunder since the halcyon days of the Revolutionary honeymoon.

In the Reserve Battalion of the Finland Guard Regiment is a Lett from Riga, Feodor Linde. He is a university man and has been in exile for his political opinions. As a member of the committee of his battalion he makes before a joint meeting of the committees of his regiment a denunciatory report regarding the Miliukov note. He moves that a demonstration be organized against the note and his motion is unanimously adopted. He then goes to other military units and engages them to join in the demonstration.

So here on the afternoon of May 3d the streets shake to the tread of marching regiments—the Finland, the Moscow, the 180th, the Kexholm, the Baltic crews, and several others—bearing banners with such inscriptions as “Down with Conquest!” “Down with Imperialistic Policy!” “Down with Miliukov!” “Miliukov must resign,” “Long live the Democratic Republic!”, etc. These fifteen thousand armed men converge on the square in front of the Marie Palace and send in a deputation. None of the ministers are in the palace, but the permanent officials, who imagine that the manifestants intend mischief, telephone agitatedly for help. The Petrograd commandant, General Kornilov, hurries to the scene as well as certain members of the executive committee. In the meantime mysterious telephone messages—whether from tsarists



or from German agents we do not know—reach the various barracks, calling upon the men to turn out with their armored cars and machine-guns and overthrow the Provisional Government. In the end forty thousand men are astir and the ferment is arrested only by orders forbidding the men to leave their quarters.

From an improvised platform Skobelev and Gotz harangue the excited soldiers, assuring them that their feelings will be considered in dealing with the note, and pointing out the danger of domestic dissension in the face of a determined enemy. The troops cheer them and then listen to a delegate from the Baltic Fleet who proposes a resolution, censuring Miliukov and calling for his resignation. Finally General Kornilov appears and urges the men to maintain strict discipline and to return quietly to their barracks.

The regiments move away, but other regiments arrive as well as processions of factory workers from the other side of the Neva and citizens agitated by the previous events. The demonstration mania seizes upon a large part of the population of the capital. On the Marie Square until late at night meetings are held in which “war aims” and the note are passionately discussed. The friends of the Government now have their innings and shortly after ten o’clock an enormous procession moves into the square and gives Miliukov an ovation when in response to their insistent clamor he appears and speaks.

Miliukov says:

Citizens, when I learned this morning of the demonstra-

tions which carried banners with the inscription "Down with Miliukov!" I feared not for Miliukov but for Russia. I tried to imagine what is the condition of Russia if these cries really express the mood of the majority of the citizens; what would the ambassadors of our Allies say? They would send telegraphic communications to their governments that Russia had betrayed her allies, that Russia had excluded herself from the list of the Allied powers. The Provisional Government cannot adopt such a point of view. I affirm that the Provisional Government and I as the Minister of Foreign Affairs will keep Russia in such a position that nobody will dare accuse her of betrayal. Russia will never agree to a separate peace. The Provisional Government, as I have just said at the meeting, is a sail-boat with its sails spread. This boat can move forward only when there is wind, and we are waiting for your confidence, which will be our favorable wind and which will move our ship. I hope that you will retain your confidence in us and that your confidence will be that support for us with which we will be able to lead Russia to the road of freedom and welfare, and preserve the dignity and freedom of great Russia.

In the conference on the note, which lasts until four o'clock in the morning, Tcheidze points out that the note contains in it propositions which are utterly unacceptable to the Soviet. Beclouding the aims of the war, the note does not mention the repudiation of all annexations and indemnities and can give the Allies an absolutely wrong conception of the position which has been adopted by the democratic elements of Russia.

Miliukov insists that his note is but a paraphrase and development of the statements in the Manifesto of April 9th. He rejects the suggestion to address

a new note to the Allies. The Provisional Government threatens even to resign rather than thus stultify itself. The Soviet leaders deprecate such a step and consent that the fresh declaration of Russia's war aims shall be addressed to her people, not to the Allied governments. The Cabinet agrees to submit the draft of a declaration at the special meeting of the Soviet called for the following evening.

The events of May 3d prove to be but a dress rehearsal for those of May 4th. The issue between the Provisional Government and the Soviet has stirred the capital to its depths and innumerable demonstrations take place. The slogans on the placards and banners show a deep cleft in opinion. There are banners expressing full confidence in the Soviet and other banners appealing for trust in the Provisional Government. There are slogans from "War to Complete Victory" to "Down with the War." The demonstrations of the workers differ sharply from those of the well-to-do.

Only one party, the Cadet, summoned its followers to make a street demonstration. The affair is thus described by the Cadet newspaper *Ryech*:

The van of the demonstration was led by an automobile which carried a flag with the inscription: "Confidence in the Provisional Government." In the automobile were members of the Central Committee of the party, M. M. Vinaver and P. V. Gerasimov, who made speeches to the people whenever the procession halted. In the rear came an automobile truck with soldiers who were throwing out the appeal of the Party of People's Freedom (Cadets). On this automobile truck were placards with the inscriptions: "Victory of Free Democracies," "Down with Ger-

man Militarism," "Long Live Miliukov," "Down with Anarchy," "Long Live the Revolutionary People of the Army."

The crowd traversed Liteiny, Nevsky, and Morskaya to the Marie Palace. Along the way the demonstration was joined by other crowds with the same slogans. Among those who joined were especially noted soldiers and officers.

The crowd grew all the time, and by the time it arrived at the Marie Palace the number in the demonstration had reached several tens of thousands. In the wake of the parade were thunderous hurrahs in the honor of the Provisional Government, the army, and in honor of the Allies. On Morskaya the demonstration met two French officers. The officers were lifted on the shoulders of some of the participants of the demonstration and carried into an automobile in which were the members of the Central Committee. M. M. Vinaver greeted in the French officers our noble ally France. The crowd in reply shouted "*Vive la France!*" At the Marie Square several speeches were made. The speakers addressed the crowds from a platform and an automobile. The speech of member of the Duma Gerasimov, as well as the speeches of soldiers and officers, created special enthusiasm. The crowd gave an ovation to the members of the First Duma, as represented by Vinaver.

The crowd then sought out Guchkov and Miliukov in the War Ministry and gave them a prolonged ovation.

As was, however, to be expected, clashes began to occur between manifestants. *Ryech* says:

About noon unusual excitement prevailed on Nevsky. In many places groups of citizens and soldiers appeared who discussed the newspaper descriptions of the events of the previous day.

The arguments were passionate and the opponents did not hesitate to use strong language, but, in general, until the appearance of the organized demonstrations with armed people, the attitude remained peaceful.

About three o'clock in the afternoon the first processions appeared, some with red flags and placards reading: "Long Live the Provisional Government!"

About four o'clock demonstrating workingmen, who were armed with rifles, appeared on Nevsky. It was said they came from the Petrograd side. Their huge placards bore inscriptions: "Down with the Provisional Government."

Near the Kazan Cathedral this demonstration met another demonstration which carried banners with the inscription; "Long live the Provisional Government!" A few shots were heard in the crowd. Then a crowd of soldiers ran into the midst of the demonstration and tore down the placards inscribed: "Down with the Provisional Government!"

Near the building of the City Duma, about four o'clock, a new encounter took place with another group of demonstrators who were carrying a banner with the sentiment "Down with the Provisional Government!" and who had a guard of armed workingmen. This demonstration was met by cries of protest. A huge crowd soon formed which filled up all Nevsky and stopped the movement of street cars and carriages. The crowd made a dash for the demonstrators and part of the flags were torn down. Among other things, banners were taken away from a group of workingmen of one factory who were following the armed workingmen. Here also shots were fired. It is said that several people, and among them one woman, were wounded. The wounded were placed in an automobile and taken to a hospital. Part of the paraders with rifles, on demand of the public, were compelled to leave Nevsky with flags and placards under the protection of armed workingmen.

Everywhere were groups of citizens who were animatedly

discussing events. Individual voices which were demanding the removal of the Provisional Government were drowned in the protesting cries of citizens, who insisted on full support of the Provisional Government. Soon automobile trucks appeared on Nevsky which were filled with citizens with placards reading: "Long Live the Provisional Government!" The automobiles stopped among the crowds and the speakers appealed to citizens to support heartily the Provisional Government. From some of the automobiles leaflets were being distributed on which were printed well-known telegrams quoting the speech of Wilhelm to his guards when they were being sent to the Russian front.

On this day the bourgeoisie, feeling itself on top, does not refrain from rough treatment of proletarian demonstrators. *Izvestia* says:

Yesterday a crowd of about ten thousand people of the First City District of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party, consisting of the workers from the plant of the Society of Carved Articles, the New Cotton-Mill, the tobacco factory of Kolobov & Bobrov, the print shop Kopeika, the print shop of Gershuni, and the cotton-mill Kozhevnikov, at 5:30 in the afternoon went to the Naval Academy, where the Society of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates was meeting, to express solidarity with it and to support it. This demonstration carried banners: "Full Confidence in the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates," "Down with Imperialism," "Long Live Socialism," and "All Power to the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates."

On Znamensky Square the demonstration was stopped by two automobile trucks which bore the inscription "Long Live the Provisional Government." The occupants of these trucks demanded that the militia (city police) should not participate in the demonstration. The militia then left the demonstration, but the demonstration was broken



up as the automobiles, after permitting a part of it to pass, did not let the other part do so.

The demonstration from the Rozhdestvensky district, which also came to Znamensky Square, and which consisted almost entirely of women and in which the militia did not participate, was stopped by automobile trucks which bore the same inscription. The banners of the paraders from the Rozhdestvensky district were taken away by the occupants of the automobiles and torn by the public.

On Nevsky, from the demonstrations which carried the banners: 'Full Confidence in the Provisional Government,' "Down with Lenin, the Hireling of the Kaiser," "Long Live Miliukov," began to be heard cries that the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates should not be supported, and soon the participants of these demonstrations resorted to violence. The part of the public on Nevsky, while crying out "Provocateurs!" and "On German Money," destroyed the banners that bore the inscription "Long Live the International Unity of Workers," which was carried by the women workers of the cotton-mill. The women were dispersed and some of them were beaten with sticks. On Moika another encounter took place with an automobile in which were university and high school students. The automobiles rode into the demonstration and its occupants destroyed many banners. Students of the Military Medical Academy and of the Institute of Ways of Communication, crying out "Provocateurs!" "Leninites!" attempted to take the banners away from the women. The arrival of the member of the executive committee Skobelev created some order.

There are many protests against the violence shown demonstrating workers. Thus one letter to *Izvestia* reads:

On May 4th, a group of four thousand comrades, in-

cluding myself, which came from the following factories: Russo-Baltic, Optical, and the Nevsky Yarn Mill, decided to hold a strictly peaceful demonstration for the expression of protest regarding the historic counter-revolutionary note of the Provisional Government. We went through Nevsky to the Nikolai Naval Academy, where the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates was meeting. We all resolved to go out on the streets unarmed and, in case of meeting hostile paraders, to remain absolutely calm and not to allow any excesses on our part.

We came out from Novgorodskaya Street with two banners: "Down with the Provisional Government," and "All Power to the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates," together with the Second Rozhdestvensky District, and the Petersburg Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party. We quietly marched to Pushkinskaya Street, where we encountered three automobile trucks filled with invalids, soldiers, officers, volunteer soldiers, university and high school students, and bourgeois young ladies. They had placards reading: "Long Live the Provisional Government," "Down with Lenin," "Lenin & Company back to Germany," etc. Generally speaking, they had everything that they ought to have. The automobile trucks of our opponents, upon seeing us, blocked our way at once. Our protests that we had just as much right as they to parade peacefully, that they were committing violence, that they were violating the freedom which was achieved by us, remained fruitless. Our orderliness and calmness infuriated our opponents and they turned from words to actions: forcing our front ranks, they furiously attacked our banners, mounted riders [probably military] rode down upon us, from all sides, and finally attained a victory after a stubborn struggle of our standard-bearers, and the waving banners were torn into bits by them in a blind fury.

Member of the Committee of the Rozhdest-

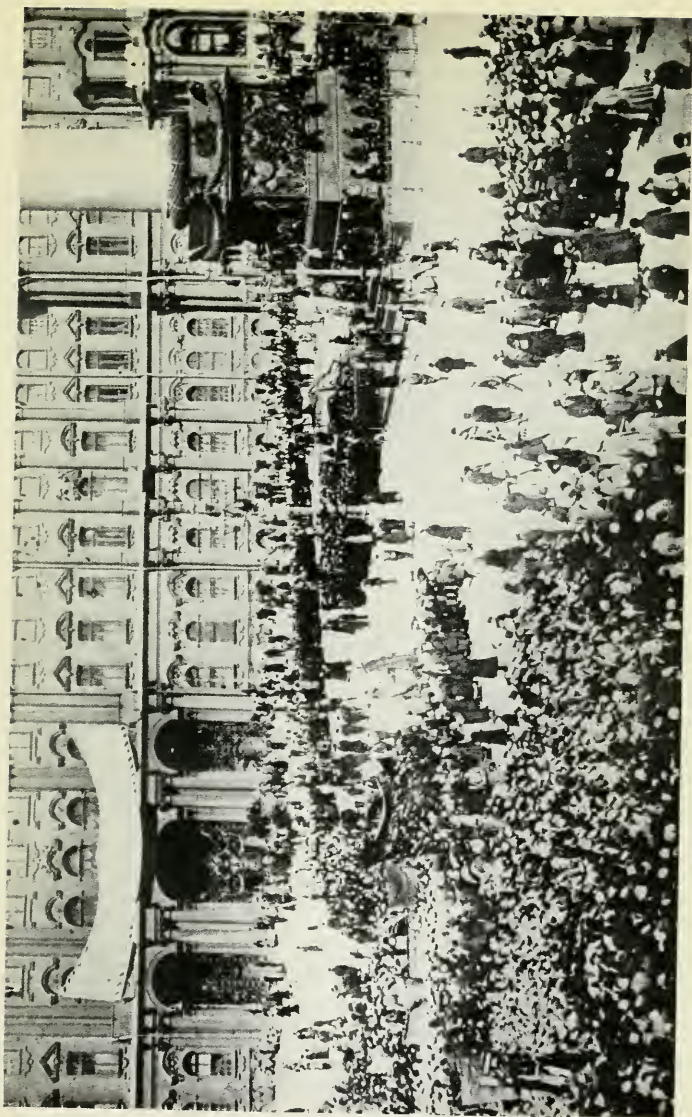
vensky District of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party.

Another witness avers:

At 3:20 a group of about a thousand workingmen was parading on Nevsky in the direction of the Admiralty. They carried banners with the inscriptions: "Down with the Provisional Government," "Down with War," "Long Live the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies." Near the Ekaterina Canal the paraders (part of whom were armed) were intersected by a small group consisting mostly of officers, university and high school students, "ladies' hats," and "derbies." The latter group ran to the workingmen and began taking away their banners and arms, and one officer in a light gray overcoat pulled out his saber and attacked the workingmen. He slashed the head of one. The workingman fell to the ground and remained in this position for fifteen or twenty minutes until he was picked up and taken into the hallway of the house where the Uchetny Bank is located. Another officer, an ensign, in a soldier's overcoat, also violently attacked the workingmen, took away their arms, and led his followers in seeking those workingmen who had run away and were hiding in courtyards, stores, and on the steps of the Catholic Church.

Shots were fired at workingmen by the partisans of the Provisional Government. I do not know whether any workingmen were killed by these shots, but I do know that I have seen five of them lying on the car tracks and in the gutter.

I confirm that there were no shots fired by workingmen, but there was a struggle for the banners and for arms. When the paraders were dispersed the zealous partisans of the Provisional Government quickly disappeared.



May Day demonstration in front of the Winter Palace





Cossacks parading on May 1st.

The previous day the Soviet issued an appeal to the people to be calm and self-restrained. To-day it sends its representatives in pairs, one worker and one soldier, to the workingmen's districts and to the barracks. While traversing the streets surging with humanity these representatives often say: "Comrades, we know that you are ready to support us in the struggle. We know that you are one with us. We know this without any demonstrations. We knew it before you came out in the streets." Attempts are made to bring the soldiers out on the streets, to bring out to the squares armored automobiles with machine-guns, but the executive committee sends out word that every order to a military unit to come out in the street must be issued on the stationery of the executive committee, must bear its seal, and must be signed by at least two of seven named persons. Late in the evening of May 4th the Soviet strives to avert anarchy by issuing an order absolutely prohibiting street meetings and demonstrations for two days. The Cadet party acquiesces and withdraws a call for further demonstration on behalf of the Provisional Government which it intended should appear in the newspapers of May 5th.

In view of the allegations of bourgeois historians that the hand of Lenin is visible in the anti-war demonstrations of May 3d and 4th it is significant that none of the Cadet newspapers make any such insinuation at the time and that the central committee of the Social-Democratic Labor (Bolshevik) party resolves that "during such a time any idea of civil war is senseless and wild" and calls upon members



of the party to observe strictly the order of the Soviet forbidding street meetings and demonstrations for two days.

About five o'clock of this eventful day the executive committee receives the explanatory declaration which the Government had agreed to prepare. Under the influence of menacing events the Government has gone farther than it had promised. It withdraws the phrase "decisive victory" save in the sense of the declaration of April 9th and explains that "by guarantees and sanctions" of enduring peace the Government has in view "the reduction of armaments, the establishment of international tribunals, etc." This explanation is to be communicated to the ambassadors of the Allied powers.

By a vote of 34 to 19 the executive committee (which has been enlarged by the addition of representatives of other soviets so that it no longer speaks for Petrograd alone) approves the explanatory note and recommends it to the plenary meeting of the Petrograd Soviet which occurs this evening. In this meeting Tseretelli, the Menshevik Prince from the Caucasus, ex-member of the Second Duma, who has spent ten years in Siberia, urges that the Soviet support the Provisional Government in every possible way. Kemenev, a Bolshevik, opposes the resolution on the ground that there is no reason whatever to trust the Provisional Government. He proposes the formation of a purely Socialist government.

On behalf of the Bolsheviks Madame Kolontai offers this resolution:

In order to ascertain the will of the majority of the popu-

lation of Petrograd, it is necessary to take at once a vote of the people in all districts of Petrograd and vicinity regarding the question of its attitude to the note of the government, regarding the support of the policy of any of the parties, and the kind of provisional government that is desirable. All the party agitators, and factories, regiments on the streets, etc., must advocate these views and this proposition by peaceful discussion and peaceful demonstrations and meetings.

She insists that it is idle to expect from this bourgeois government a faithful carrying out of the wishes of the democracy.

After extended debate the Soviet accepts with only thirteen negative votes the recommendation of its executive committee.

Thus the note incident is closed, but its effects are far-reaching. The contrast in attitude toward peace between the small comfortably-off classes and the huge undernourished, decimated, suffering, despairing masses has been staged for all to see. The issue being joined between the Provisional Government and the Soviet, the bourgeoisie has rallied round the Provisional Government, while the democracy has rallied round the Soviet. The working nine-tenths of the people will mark and inwardly digest the significance of the fact that the bourgeois tenth regards the Provisional Government as *their* government. The specter of civil war which for two days hovered over the capital vanishes for a season, but it will return.

The fact that during the crisis it was the Soviet rather than the Provisional Government that got itself obeyed by the soldiers and the masses convinces the best men on both sides that something must be

done to strengthen the Provisional Government with the working people and insure future harmony between the two bodies which between them wield what authority remains in Russia. On May 9th Prince Lvov sends the Soviet a formal invitation to participate in the formation of a coalition government. At first the Soviet leaders decline, preferring to be free to play their own hand, to have real power but without responsibility. If they take hold and Russia goes to ruin in their charge, their party will be discredited forever. But the sky darkens. Guchkov resigns, declaring himself unable longer "to share responsibility for the grievous sin that is being committed against our fatherland." He has been confronted with a declaration of "soldiers' rights" which he would not sanction with his signature.

At a conference of delegates from the Government Kerensky declares:

If we are to save the country, things cannot continue on their present course. It may be the time is near when we must tell you that we cannot give you bread in the quantity you expect, or maintain the supplies of ammunition on which you have a right to count. My strength is failing, because I no longer have my old confidence that we have before us, not revolting slaves, but conscious citizens, creating a new state with an enthusiasm worthy of the Russian nation. Alas that I did not die two months ago, for then I should have died in the splendid dream that once and for all a new life had dawned for Russia! If the tragedy and disorder of the situation are not at once recognized, if it is not understood that now responsibility lies on all, if our state organism cannot be made to act as smoothly as a well-oiled machine, then all our dreams,

all our aspirations, will be thrown back for years, and perhaps will be drowned in blood.<sup>1</sup>

Such considerations induce the executive committee to relent and appoint a deputation to confer with the Cabinet on the subject. They insist on a new Minister of Foreign Affairs, so Miliukov leaves the Cabinet, declining to take any other portfolio. Tereshchenko takes his place and five representatives of the Soviet are introduced into the Cabinet, viz., Tchernov, Skobelev, Tseretelli, Peshekhanov, and Pereverzev. The Provisional Government,<sup>2</sup> while rejecting all thought of a separate peace, "sets itself as its aim the speediest possible attainment of a general peace, having as its object neither the taking from others of their national possessions, nor the forcible seizure of foreign territories—a peace without annexations or indemnities on the principle of the self-determination of nationalities."

It is furthermore agreed that the new socialist ministers are to join the Cabinet as representatives of the Soviet, shall be responsible to it, and shall periodically report to it. The Soviet issues a proclamation expressing "full confidence" in the new Government and commending it to the nation. So

<sup>1</sup> Wilcox, *Russia's Ruin*, p. 182.

<sup>2</sup> The names of the members of the new Cabinet are: (1) Premier and Minister of the Interior, Prince Lvov; (2) Minister of Labor, Skobelev (S. D.); (3) Minister of Justice, Pereverzev (S. R.); (4) Agriculture, Tchernov (S. R.); (5) Supplies, Peshekhanov (Pop-Soc.); (6) War and Marine, Kerensky (S. R.); (7) Social Assistance, Prince Shakhovskoy (Cadet); (8) Finance, Shingarev (Cadet); (9) Posts and Telegraphs, Tseretelli (S. D.); (10) Commerce and Industry, Konovalov (Progressist); (11) Foreign Affairs, Tereshchenko (non-party); (12) Railways and Communications, Nekrassov (Cadet); (13) State-Controller, Godnev (Oct.); (14) Education, Manuilov (Cadet); (15) Synod, Lvov (Oct.).

with its six Socialists to ten bourgeois Liberals the Ministry starts off with renewed vigor; but every day from a thousand street corners and soap-boxes spreads the idea "All power to the Soviets!"

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE REVOLUTION AND LABOR

**I**N the brief "honeymoon" period following the March Revolution the putting forward of economic demands was scarcely thought of. A Belgian employer at once assembled his working force to propose to them that a common agreement on certain points should be drawn up on the basis of which they would eventually proceed to a revision of the scale of wages which the high cost of living had rendered necessary. But his workers stopped him before he was well under way with his speech, protesting that there could be no question of discussing such a matter; since the Revolution all were brothers, and they only asked leave to do for their brother what they had heretofore done for their employer.<sup>1</sup> It did not take the Russian workmen long, however, to arrive at a less idyllic conception of the social question.

With the prices of the necessaries of life mounting by leaps and bounds in response to the constantly augmenting issues of paper money found necessary for financing the new régime, it was inevitable that wage scales should frequently be revised upward; and, once the wage-earners realized that no longer were the police there to protect the employer from their strikes and threats of personal violence, they

<sup>1</sup> Vandervelde, *Three Aspects of the Russian Revolution* p. 41.



sometimes forced their wages up faster even than the cost of living rose.

Their compunction was the less from the fact that, thanks to free speech and a free press, they soon began to be acquainted with the figures of the extraordinary profits many of the employers had been reaping. Mrs. Williams, who writes from the Cadet point of view, says:

The extravagant economic demands of the miners were to a great extent justified by the fact that, during the war, the mine-owners had been specially bare-faced in their exploitation of this laborious kind of work, taking advantage of the workmen being unable to leave. The shareholders got enormous dividends (up to 200 per cent.), while wages were raised at a most parsimonious rate.<sup>1</sup>

After observing that the hundred-ruble shares of industrial companies were quoted at 300, 400, and even up to 1,000 rubles, indicating an expected yearly return of 18, 24 and, in cases, up to 60 per cent., I finally put this question on five occasions to American business men with long experience in Russia: "Do you think that under the old régime twenty per cent. per annum was as common a rate of return to Russian factory capital as ten per cent. is in America?" In every instance the answer was "Yes."

From time to time in the Russian newspapers of the spring of 1917 appear financial statements of various banks and industrial enterprises, showing their profits for 1916. From these one can form a notion of how the Russian factory worker will respond, once the agitators have fixed in his mind the

<sup>1</sup> *From Liberty to Brest-Litovsk*, p. 229.

idea that his employer "exploits" him. Here are some of the concerns with their profits for 1916. I cannot say how typical they are.

	Capital in Rubles	Net Profits in Rubles	Per cent. of annual profit
United Cable Factories .....	6,000,000	10,299,038	170
Skapshal Bros. Tobacco Co. ....	2,400,000	510,175	21
T. M. Aivaz Machine Construction ...	4,000,000	4,670,534	117
Russian General Elec. Co. ....	12,000,000	2,807,837	23
Kolumna Co. Machine Construction ..	15,000,000	7,482,832	50
A. S. Lavrov (Gatchina factory) ....	500,000	176,741	35
Petrovsk Cotton & Textile Mfg. Co. ..	1,200,000	679,719	57
Stodol Woolen Co. of Barishnikov Sons	3,500,000	1,849,735	53
Emil Zindel Mfg. Co. ....	9,000,000	2,962,551	33
S. I. Chepelev Sons, Perfumery Co. ...	800,000	455,917	57

While foraging in these financial columns one may as well cite some figures throwing light on the earnings of Russian banking capital:

	Capital in Rubles	Net Profits in Rubles	Per cent. of annual profit
Russo-French Com. Bank Petrograd Branch .....	18,000,000	4,296,216	24
Azov-Don Commercial Bank .....	60,000,000	19,256,930	32
Russian Com'l & Ind. Bank .....	35,000,000	13,328,063	38
Petrograd Uchetin & Ssudrin Bank ..	30,000,000	12,963,275	43
Russian Bank for Foreign Trade .....	60,000,000	18,187,089	30
Nijni-Novgorod-Samara Land Bank ..	9,010,500	1,712,133	19

Even without the ruble's loss of purchasing power a general increase of wages was an altogether proper consequence of the Revolution, for it was impossible that free men should consent to be paid such a pittance as the majority of the Russian workers had received. The manufacturers quickly realized their changed plight and offered little resistance to the doubling or trebling of wages. Here and there, however, the workers pushed up their pay to a preposterous figure. Day-laborers employed in peat-

cutting in a certain district demanded a thousand rubles per month. The loaders at Tsaritzuin on the lower Volga forced up their pay to thirty-three rubles for a six-hour day! The workers in one concern employing five thousand hands concluded that, as they were earning eight rubles a day more than before the Revolution, they had long been done out of this sum by their employers; so they claimed for each man eight rubles a day back pay for the last three years,—in all a bagatelle of thirty-six million rubles! Their delegation brought thirteen sacks in which to take away the money, put the staff of the concern under guard in the offices, and left with the avowed intention of returning next day to get the money or else tie up the members of the staff in the sacks and throw them into the Neva. Word was gotten to the Minister of Labor, who brought the men to see the absurdity of their demands and the impropriety of their methods. They withdrew their claim and released the staff and the factory went on as before, the cordial relationship between the management and workmen not having suffered in the least!

Yet in a factory near Nijni Novgorod as late as April women and children worked twelve hours for from 20 to 90 kopeks a day. In September I found women in a soap-factory in Kazan earning only  $2\frac{1}{2}$  rubles daily, with, however, the privilege of buying bread at the old price. A big oil man in Baku confessed to me that, although the wages of the seventy thousand laborers in the Baku oil industry had gone up 460% since the outbreak of the war, the rise in the cost of living had been still greater.

In Sormova the work people declared to me that they were not living so well as they had lived six months earlier.

However this may be, it is certain a decline in productivity per man set in very soon after the Revolution and presently reached a truly calamitous figure. Having chased off the scene the heavy-handed foreman who had been wont to bully and drive them, the workers were a little disposed to behave like the pupils of a martinet teacher when that teacher is out of the school room. Generally time wages were substituted for piece wages and the employees were not overscrupulous in their use of the time the employer had paid for. Not only was labor interspersed with tea-drinking, smoking, chatting, and talking politics, but, whenever the men felt like it, they held a meeting at the employer's expense. The boss who interfered was likely to be ridden out of the works in a wheelbarrow. Within a fortnight after the Revolution the Petrograd Association of Manufacturers declared that the workers presented demands which could not be satisfied, violence was often resorted to, and production was disorganized, as a result of which the productivity of the factories had fallen to a low figure. It therefore was resolved to appeal to the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates, pointing out the urgent necessity of taking immediate measures to reestablish normal life in the factories, and in particular the necessity of having the representatives of the Soviet visit the factories periodically in order to impress upon the workers the impossibility of such a state of affairs.

Before the Seventh Convention of the Cadet party on May 25th Kutler, solicitor of the coal-mine operators of the Donetz Basin, declared:

In the great majority of industrial enterprises there is a sharp fall in production. This fall is sometimes expressed by 20, 30, and 40 per cent. There are very often cases in Petrograd where the industrial enterprises produce only 40 or even 30 per cent. of their former production. In individual cases this fall in production is expressed in still higher figures. I may point to one factory which at the present time produces 10 per cent. of its former products, using the same number of workers.

More impartial, no doubt, is the report made to the combined executive committees of the soviets by Cherevanin on August 1st:

If we look at figures we see the following situation. In the south of Russia out of 64 blast furnaces only 42 are working, producing only 75 per cent. of their normal output. Out of 98 Martin's furnaces only 67 are working, also producing 75 per cent. The June program was executed only to the extent of 65 per cent. while in July still less will be done. In the Central district the situation is not any better.

Before the Moscow Conference near the end of August General Kornilov stated that the output of the gun plants and the shell plants had declined 60 per cent. as compared with the last three months of the old régime, while that of the aeroplane factories had fallen off 80 per cent.

In August and September the most frequent estimate of the loss of productivity given me was 50 per cent. In Saratov a labor leader estimated pro-

ductivity as 60 or 70 below normal and still declining. Coal-miners in the Donetz basin were 36 per cent. less effective than they were a year earlier. The best showing was that of an American company near Moscow which followed American ideals in handling its men and by December had brought production up to 70 per cent. of the old figure.

Labor leaders admitted the slump, but insisted that labor should not bear all the blame. Part of it was due to the deterioration of machinery (there being great difficulty in replacement) and to irregularity in the supply of raw materials. So far as the men were responsible for it, they looked upon it as only a natural reaction from the forced pace at which they formerly worked.

Some labor men think that employers are sabotaging industry in order to bring about a situation which would favor their regaining their former control. At the end of May a delegation of miners from the Donetz region point out that all repair of machines has ceased. No supports are set in the mines. Stocks of coal and coke are hidden away. Mines are allowed to be flooded. Labor leaders suspect that, under plea of inability to obtain sufficient raw material, some manufacturers are trying to get rid of their present labor force in order to build up a new force on their own terms, after labor has experienced a season of unemployment. They dare not reply to their laborers' demands with a lock-out, for then their factories would be reopened without them, but they may sabotage their production with impunity. The Belgian mission observes:

“There are employers who, instead of combating dis-



order in their workshops, leave it alone, as if they hoped that extreme disorder in production would achieve their purpose and obtain for them again the power which they have lost.”<sup>1</sup>

I noticed in talking over the situation with Russian employers that they were more philosophical and less exasperated than I should expect American employers to be in like circumstances. Their serene confidence that the disease “would soon run its course” may have been based upon their intention to create a situation which would “bring labor to its senses.”

In various other directions labor demonstrated its new control over conditions. Within four months after the Revolution the eight-hour working day prevailed nearly everywhere and in the larger cities office-workers generally got their day down to six hours. Even the servant girls caught the infection and demanded an eight-hour day as well as certain days “off.”

The employer in many cases lost the power to “fire.” He could get rid of an undesired workman only with the consent of the factory committee. In case, owing to lack of raw material, it was necessary to lay off some workers the organized employees, not the employer, decided which should be dispensed with. Naturally those dismissed were the least popular rather than the least efficient.

There were cases in which labor dictated whom the capitalist should employ. Here, for example, are some of the terms of a collective agreement which the representatives of the hundred large em-

<sup>1</sup> Vandervelde, *Three Aspects of the Russian Revolution*, p. 109.

ploying oil firms at Baku felt obliged to enter into about the end of September. The spokesman of the employers said:

They ask that we grant leave on pay for a certain period to a sick employee. Most of us are doing that already. They stipulate that on dismissal an employee shall receive a month's pay for every year he has been in our service, Agreed. They demand that no workman be dismissed without the consent of a committee representing the men. That's all right. They require that we take on new men from a list submitted by them. That's reasonable enough. They know far better than we can whether or not a fellow is safe to work alongside of in a dangerous business like ours. But when they demand control over the hiring and firing of *all* our employees,—foremen, superintendents, and managers as well as workmen,—we balk. We don't see how we can yield that point without losing the control essential to discipline and efficiency. Yet if we don't sign to-night, they threaten to strike.

Dismissal pay was another conquest the revolutionary proletariat were beginning to make. Under the old régime the Russian employer was legally bound to pay his dismissed employee wages for two weeks beyond the term of employment. It was a sop to the workingmen to make up to them for not having the right to strike and, of course, it was valueless under the tsar. After the Revolution, however, there was an endeavor to enforce this law and to give the dismissed workman a legal right to a month's wages instead of a fortnight's. In a number of industries the month of leeway was established by joint agreement. In the typographic industry masters and men agreed to a three-months'

minimum term of employment. Some groups of workers called for a much broader margin of security. As we have seen, the oil-men demanded and secured a month's dismissal pay *for every year of service*. A large American manufacturing concern was asked by its men to pay three months' dismissal wages for every year of service. On the break-up of the office force of a certain American life insurance company, the men put in a claim for six months' pay all around.

Other benefits some groups of workers gained were: a fixed annual vacation of two to four weeks with pay; free medical and hospital treatment not only for injuries and maladies arising out of the work, but for all illness of the employee or of his family; and the continuance of wages for an invalid employee, even if his incapacitation in no way arose out of the industry. Of course all these conquests have disappeared in a new régime that has no place for the employing capitalist.



Bourgeoisie at work



D. Antonov  
Commander of the Red Guard in the November Revolution



## CHAPTER XIV

### THE DECOMPOSITION OF THE ARMY

THE demoralization, break-up, and final melting away of the enormous Russian Army—all within the space of nine or ten months—is surely one of the most amazing spectacles history offers. In all the annals of wars and armies there is nothing to be compared with it. It is customary to offer for the phenomenon a very simple explanation, viz., vicious propaganda, whereas it was, in fact, the outcome of the operation of several factors.

Immediately upon the outbreak of the Revolution a cleavage took place in the army between the old-régime officers and the common soldiers and sailors. Under the tsar the officers of the army were drawn from the families of the privileged class. The young men were put in the cadet schools, where they were subjected to a very elaborate system of espionage, and then finished in the special schools of the various branches of the army. All those youths who were liberal in tendency or showed an unwholesome sympathy with the common people were weeded out and sent home. It was the "hard-boiled" lads who were retained and given commands. They were trained in a brutal discipline, taught to serve the tsar rather than the people, and expected after their period of service, provided that their service was found competent, to retire to Petrograd or Mos-



cow and there pass the rest of their lives at ease and in the most delightful social enjoyment.

How could the common soldiers believe that such officers in their hearts wished well to the Revolution? Colonel Robins, of the American Red Cross, who spoke for the Allied cause before many units in the different arms of the Russian service during the autumn of 1917, found in one barracks a general in command of six regiments of the general's division, the rest being on the front. The general was a count and something like 80 per cent. of the soldiers in the six regiments were from the villages of his estate. If the purposes of the Revolution were accomplished, this general would lose the things for which he had been educated to fight, and he would lose not only them, but also his title, his lands, and his power! If the Revolution were a success, these common soldiers would get the land of the estate belonging to their commanding general. How could there be any moral unity between such commanding officers and such soldiers?

One would err in supposing that the Revolution at first grated harshly upon the inbred loyalties of the officers of aristocratic origin, but that, as time went on, such officers became more reconciled to the new order. It is probable that the current of tendency ran just the other way. No doubt more officers were friendly to the Revolution in April, when one could look forward to a liberal or bourgeois government, than in September, by which time it had become clear that the soviets, reflecting the will of the common people, had the whip hand and intended to effect vast changes in the distribution of wealth

and the position of the propertied. Broad-minded, indeed, must be that officer of *pomieshtchik* affiliation who kept his early enthusiasm for the Revolution after it had become apparent that it would certainly beggar him!

Another factor explaining the crumbling away of Russia's military power was the wide diffusion of the "defeatist" doctrine. This doctrine had two aspects. One was the conviction, widely held by revolutionary workers and peasants and the general revolutionary leadership, that until the autocracy had been defeated in some foreign war it could not be overthrown in Russia; and that therefore every lover of his people, no matter how generally patriotic, ought to wish for the defeat of the tsar's armies. This defeatist doctrine was supplemented by a doctrine of defeatism that was philosophical and semi-religious. We see it in the non-resistance teaching of Tolstoy, the idea that the use of force is anti-Christian and always results in injury to the simple people of the land. Owing to the lodgment of these doctrines in the minds of a great many Russians the Russian people never developed so strong and general a will-to-win-the-war as most of the other belligerent peoples.

Another element in the disintegration of the Russian army, and of the Russian state inasmuch as an effective army is indispensable to the maintenance of such a state, was the widespread opinion that the war was the tsar's war, undertaken for imperialistic purposes. In the general revolutionary mind the war was cursed as the tsar's imperialistic war for the purpose of obtaining the Straits of the Dardan-

elles and putting the Greek cross above Santa Sophia in Constantinople.

I have already shown how Army Order No. 1, issued not by the Provisional Government but by the Soviet, and intended not for the entire army but for the Petrograd garrison, was distributed all along the front and resulted in every unit forming its committee.<sup>1</sup>

Within a week Guchkov, Minister of War, issued an order directing that in place of titles such forms of address be used as "Mr. General," "Mr. Captain," etc., that soldiers be addressed as "you" instead of "thou"; and doing away with restrictions which forbade common soldiers to smoke in the streets and in public places, frequent clubs and meetings, ride inside a tram-car, and belong to societies for political purposes.

One of the first acts of Kerensky as Minister of War was to issue an army order which became known as "the Soldiers' Charter." The clauses most doubtful from the point of view of military discipline are the following:

(2) Every person serving in the Army has the right to belong to any political, national, religious, economic, or professional organization, society, or union.

(3) Every person serving in the Army has the right,

<sup>1</sup> "Order No. 1 was not communicated to any unit nor to any staff. Nevertheless, as soon as it appeared, it was applied in the Petrograd garrison from which it spread with lightning-like speed over all Russia and through the army. In 1905 when I was returning in mid-December from Manchuria I received in the station at Krasnoyarsk a like order signed by the Soviet of delegates of the third battalion of railroad reservists. On comparing the two documents I found that Order No. 1 was the exact copy of that of Krasnoyarsk in 1905."—General Monkevitz, *La Decomposition de l'armee Russe*, p. 38.

when off duty, to utter freely and publicly, orally, or in writing, or in print, his political, religious, social and other views.

(12) The obligatory salute . . . is abolished and is replaced for all persons serving in the Army by a voluntary and mutual salute. . . .

(18) The right of internal self-government, punishment and control in certain strictly defined matters (Army orders, No. 213 and 274) belongs to the elected army organizations, committees and courts.

The main defect of this "charter" lay in the fact that it conferred "rights" without defining "duties." Kerensky boasted that it bestowed on Russian soldiers privileges such as were not enjoyed by any other soldier in the world. In view of what befell it is not likely that any other people will be in a hurry to deprive the Russian soldiers of this title to distinction.

In theory the committees, which soon existed for every grade of army unit great or small, were to look after the soldier's moral and material welfare, protect his legal rights, and see that the men were not moved about by their generals, like pawns on a chessboard, in order to promote some counter-revolutionary attempt. Nobody intended that they should meddle with strictly military matters. But, given the distrust the rank and file felt for their officers, and given the ascendancy the bold and ready talker was bound to gain over ignorant and illiterate men, it was inevitable that before long the committees were debating such topics as the relief of the front-line units, the amount of time to be devoted to exercises and manœuvres, the reliability of

the commanding officer, etc. As a Russian general on the Rumanian sector of the front puts it:

As one man the whole army talked, talked, talked. . . . In our army above 40,000 men were members of committees and they rendered no service save talking. . . . Although overwhelmed with the preparation of the July offensive, our Staff was flooded with deputations from the different military units making futile requests and complaints. Often the committees addressed the commanding general "demanding" the displacement of certain officers on the ground that they were "loyal to the old régime" or "do not recognize the liberties conquered by the people."

As to exercises, manœuvres, and the improvement of our positions, one no longer thought of them. In some regiments the committees had fixed the day's work at six, five, or even four hours. There were cases when whole regiments refused to quit their quarters in order to relieve their comrades in the front line. It was only after long parleys that one persuaded them to obey. The officers, deprived of all authority, were powerless to contend with this state of things.<sup>1</sup>

An altogether different cause of demoralization was the Bolshevik propaganda—agitators and literature—which went forward rapidly from May on. Their contention was that the war was "capitalistic" and that soldiers ought to fight no more until the secret treaties made by the tsar had been revised and the Allies had accepted the principle of peace "without annexations or indemnities." Under the influence of such teachings the soldiers became at first sullen and suspicious, at last savage and fero-

<sup>1</sup> Monkevitz, *op. cit.*

scious toward the officers who sought to make them fight.

In a speech before the Moscow Soviet on March 12, 1918, Lenin said in reply to the charge of having disorganized the Russian army:

Had it not been for individuals who, like Kerensky, called themselves socialists but, as a matter of fact, were hiding in their pockets secret treaties by which the Russian people were bound to fight until 1918—then, perhaps, the Russian army and the Russian Revolution might have escaped from the intolerable trials and humiliations which we had to endure. If in those days all power had passed to the Soviets, if the compromisers, instead of supporting Kerensky and sending the army into battle, had proposed then a democratic peace, the army would not have been ruined. They ought to have told the soldiers: "Stand still; hold in one hand your rifle and in the other the torn-up imperialistic covenant and a new proposal of general peace to the whole democratic world; do not break the front." Thus the army and the Revolution could have been saved.<sup>1</sup>

The factors in the demoralization of the soldiers appear very clearly in the reports of the representatives of the front before the Central Executive Committee of the soviets on July 29th. The delegate from the Tenth Army said:

. . . There is such a mood of weariness in the regiments as a result of three years of war, and such unwillingness to die, that it is extremely difficult to inspire them to heroic

<sup>1</sup> I have often been asked whether *anything* could have been done to avert the rotting of the Russian Army and Russia's abandonment of the war. I have always replied: "If in July, 1917, the Allies had issued the declaration of war aims which they permitted President Wilson to make on January 8, 1918, it is possible that Russia might have stayed with the Allies."



action. In the heart of every soldier from the very beginning of the war, and since the revolution especially, the dream of peace is invincibly powerful. And if some part was played by the agitation of certain political parties and individuals in this longing for peace that part, however, has been secondary. This agitation simply chimed in with pre-existing sentiment of the army. . . .

As to the higher command its definite counter-revolutionary tendency is unquestionable. Being extremely incapable, the higher command opposes all the measures of the government aiming to strengthen the soldiers' organizations. . . .

The representative of the Ninth Army, who followed him, spoke in like vein:

Approximately the same thing happened with us also. The same weariness, the same superiority in technical equipment and numbers over the enemy, the same counter-revolutionary tendencies of the command.

All the slogans thrown at us from the rear were taken in a very literal and primitive manner, and produced a most original reaction. The revolution was accepted not as a new system but as an end to all the hardships which a state imposes.

Freedom meant the opportunity to do anything that one pleased. Equality was understood in a most anarchistic manner. Soldiers and officers must be equal in absolutely everything. There were even proposals in the committee that all, beginning with the company cook and ending with the War Minister, should receive the same pay, about seven rubles a month. Even the fact that the members of the committees used automobiles in traveling about on their official duties caused protest. Some said: "What kind of equality is it when he rides and I have to walk?" The slogan "Combating the bourgeoisie" was

taken in literal and simple fashion: anyone who was placed in better condition was a "bourgeois," a soldier who lived in a better dugout was a "bourgeois." Soldiers in the artillery were considered absolute "bourgeois" as they were somewhat removed from the front-line trenches.

The delegate from the Fifth Army declared:

During the first revolutionary days all of the army was engulfed by a wave of enthusiasm—now it has gone quite to the bad.

The cause is partly disillusionment, owing to the tired and ignorant mass of soldiers having expected from the revolution an immediate conclusion of peace. The *Pravda*<sup>1</sup> and the *Trench Pravda* undoubtedly played a part in the deterioration. The gendarmes and the policemen<sup>2</sup> played their part as well. They were difficult to deal with, for the things that they advocated met the desires of the weary deteriorating army.

The representative of the Twelfth Army observed:

. . . The principal causes of all these conditions are general. They are weariness, lack of replacements and the experiences of three years of war.

The problem was complicated by the presence of gendarmes and police propaganda. Gendarmes and policemen hiding behind Bolshevik slogans were the leaders and creators of disorganization. They were aided in many things by the *Trench Pravda*, which flouted the orders of the revolutionary democracy.

The critical attitude of the men toward the war presently gave rise to the strangest happenings.

<sup>1</sup> Official organ of the Bolshevik party.

<sup>2</sup> These minions of the old régime were promptly sent to the front by the Provisional Government, but they proved to be a most pernicious influence in the army.

The Galician offensive launched by Kerensky on July 1st opened with brilliant success and thousands of prisoners were taken. But at a critical moment a regiment which had orders to support a threatened point deliberately turned its back upon the enemy and retired, thereby obliging the neighboring sections of the front to give way. Retirement degenerated into mad flight and far to the rear mobs of brutalized soldiers inflicted horrors upon women and children.

Things had now come to such a pass that the chief preparation for an offensive consisted in persuading these childlike soldiers of the necessity of fighting in order to bring about an early peace. There were many cases in which, when the moment came to go "over the top," only the officers and a few soldiers fired by their example attacked, the rest refusing; and at the moment these heroes threw themselves upon the enemy those remaining behind shot them in the back!

One general, having heard that one of his regiments meditated just this thing in the morrow's attack, gathered the men about him and said:

"I have heard say that among the soldiers of this valiant regiment there are cowards who have the intention of shooting their officers at the moment of attack. Know that I will not survive such an infamy. I shall be with you when the assault begins and I order you to send your traitorous bullets against me before taking the life of your officers. Let my body bear witness to your cowardice!" At these words the conscience of the soldiers awakened. Troubled voices were lifted, affirming that no such

thing would occur in this regiment. He left after having had their promise that there would be no treason and, in fact, this regiment fought well.

By autumn save for rare units the fight was all out of the Russian Army. Dreaming only of peace and home, the soldiers had lost all military bearing. Dirty, unkempt, hands in pockets and a cigarette in the mouth, these slouching men with an insolent, cynical expression on their faces looked more like brigands than citizens defending their country. The soldiers had come to feel for their officers the hate they felt for the bourgeoisie. At first the officers regarded the soldiers as misled children, but in time they returned hate for hate. Just here we see germinating that ferocity which later will characterize the Red Terror and the White Terror. After the Kornilov attempt, which most of the officers approved, the gulf widened and thenceforth the officers were called "Kornilovists."<sup>1</sup>

Then fraternalization came in to destroy what .

<sup>1</sup> On September 16th the Central Executive Committee of the soviets appealed to the soldiers not to lynch their officers. It said in part:

" . . . Soldiers of the Russian Revolution. Restrain your anger. There should be no violence and lawless killing of officers. Among them the great majority are our comrades in the Revolution. And the counter-revolutionary enemy, while jeering at you, will try to set you on your comrades—the Revolutionary officers. In the disorderly unlawful violence there may be spilling of blood, blood of the innocent, to the joy of the enemies of the Revolution and for the benefit of the German General Staff. Your representatives are vigilantly watching that the traitors should receive their deserved punishment.

"Every one of the traitors—from a general to a soldier—will answer in court for the rebellion against the Revolutionary government.

"The Revolution will punish the traitors, the interests of the Revolution demand that the ascertainment of guilt should be by means of a public trial.

"In the interest of the Revolution abstain from unlawful violence."

vestiges of soldier morale yet remained. No longer were there patrols or reconnaissances. The Russian soldiers would have deemed it treachery to attack the enemy. The German and Austrian commanders, delighted to take advantage of this mood, formed in each company a special squad, well provided with beer, charged with the duty of entering into relations with the Russians opposite them. Its members received in advance detailed instructions as to what to talk about and what ideas to spread among the Russians. They had quantities of Russian literature "made in Germany" which they distributed. They provided letter-boxes and offered to convey letters from the Russian soldiers to their families in the occupied provinces. Naturally by this means they learned everything they wished to know.<sup>1</sup>

From the moment of entering on this phase the

<sup>1</sup> On May 13th *Izvestia* printed the following:

Yesterday in the newspaper *Pravda* a resolution was printed which was adopted by the Bolshevik Conference regarding fraternization of soldiers in the trenches. This resolution says in part: "The party of Bolsheviks will especially support the mass fraternization of soldiers of all warring countries at the front, which has already begun, and will aim to turn this elementary exhibition of the solidarity of the oppressed into a conscious and better organized movement for transferring government authority in all the warring countries to the revolutionary proletariat." We consider it necessary to call the attention of the comrades to this resolution and to warn them that in this resolution is hidden a danger to the cause of the defense of the Revolution at the front.

We receive daily from the front telegrams and resolutions about fraternization, and everywhere comrades emphasize that fraternization in the trenches is a dark and dangerous affair. Under the guise of fraternization spying sometimes takes place. Often agents of the German staff, dressed as soldiers, come to fraternize.

Those ready to support fraternization take upon themselves a great responsibility for its possible consequences. Against these tactics we warn comrade soldiers, for they will have to pay a great price for them—their lives and their blood!

How well events fulfilled this prophecy!

Russian soldiers at the front led an easy life. Whereas formerly their chief desire had been to get to the rear, now they coveted a position at the front, for they were in no danger and had nothing to do, while in the rear there was work to be done in connection with the care of the animals and the getting up of supplies.

The instituting of commissaries, which the Provisional Government, following the example of the French Convention of 1793, sent to the various armies to serve as intermediaries between the commander and the troops, did not avail to arrest decay. These men were usually tried revolutionaries with a Siberian record, and if any one was entitled to the confidence of the common soldiers it was they. If the root of their trouble had been suspicion of their officers, the fervent and patriotic appeals of these commissaries to fight for the safeguarding of the Revolution against the Kaiser might have stayed its course. But the propaganda against going on with the war fell in too neatly with the soldier's natural desires to be resisted. The Russian is as brave as any other man, but, like all human beings, he feels a distinct preference for remaining alive if he perceives no worth-while end to be gained by his letting himself be killed. So the time came when the men were as ready to murder a commissary as to murder an officer.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Izvestia* of September 15th describes the end of Feodor Linde who instigated the demonstration of the Petrograd garrison on May 3d and who afterward as assistant commissary sought to stem the tide of insubordination at the front.

"Linde was killed by infuriated soldiers of the 433d Regiment, of the 11th Infantry Division. This division, after a gas attack of the enemy, refused to drill. Linde went to that division in order to



Nor did the heroic expedient of the "Women's Battalion of Death" created in May by the woman veteran Maria Botchkareva have the electrifying effect hoped for. It was expected that, set ablaze by the spectacle of three hundred of their sisters going into deadly battle, the Russian front would rise and rush forward as one man. What happened was that the men of the regiment would not advance at the "zero" hour (3 A. M., July 8th), but spent hours in debating whether or not to attack. Finally, late in the afternoon, the officers and best men of the regiment joined with the women in a costly but successful attack. They took the first, second, and third enemy lines, but found themselves in an exposed position and menaced by counter-attack. The commander telephoned them to hold on, as he was sending the Ninth Corps to their succor. Hours passed, but the aid failed to arrive. The Ninth

persuade the soldiers to obey orders, but did not succeed in his mission. In view of the complete decomposition of the regiments of this division Linde demanded the following day that the division should surrender the instigators of disorder. The soldiers surrendered twenty-eight instigators, who were placed under arrest. Four companies who showed resistance were disbanded. Linde made a speech to each company in which he described Russia's difficult position and dwelt upon the duty of the soldier. While so doing two battalions of the 433d Regiment gathered up their arms and sent a delegation to Linde which invited him to visit them. Linde ordered both battalions to line up, and an hour later entered an automobile and started out on his way to those battalions. When the automobile came out on a forest road shots were fired in quick succession from behind the trees. Several hundred soldiers ran out on the road, and surrounded the automobile. A small Cossack convoy which was escorting the automobile scattered. Linde left the automobile and attempted to reach the nearest earthen hut, but at the door of the hut fell under the blows. The mob engaged in mockery over the corpse, fired at it and stuck bayonets into it. In the evening of the same day the same regiment murdered the Chief of the Division, General Hirschfeld."

[Signed] VOITINSKY.

Corps left its reserve billets and went forward till it came to the front-line Russian trenches. There it stopped and held a meeting to decide whether or not to go on. The officers implored the men to advance, as the calls for help from the Women's Battalion became more insistent. There was no response. The men declared themselves ready to resist a German attack, but would engage in no offensive operation. The women extricated themselves as best they could, having lost a third of their number. As the breathless, muddy, blood-bespattered survivors one by one trekked back into their trenches, they found the Ninth Corps still debating whether or not to go to their relief!

In the end the Women's Battalion had to be abruptly disbanded in order to save its members from being lynched by the infuriated soldiers, who regarded its keeping up of hostilities against the Germans as delaying peace.<sup>1</sup>

In its final phase of demoralization the Russian Army simply disintegrates. Without permission, the soldier, taking haversack, rifle, and some clips of cartridges, demobilizes himself and starts for home. His uniform entitles him to free transportation and bread at a nominal price, while in all the larger towns there are canteens for the soldier's accommodation. In the winter of 1917-18 these men by tens of thousands stream along the railroads. The stations are packed. No train moves away from the front without every coupé, aisle, wash-room, vestibule, and platform being packed with soldiers. The men even cluster on the steps of the cars and

<sup>1</sup> See Botchkareva's *Yashka*, Chapters XIV-XVI.

pile upon the roof until sometimes it gives way.

Much has been made of the occasional brutalities committed by traveling soldiers against civilian passengers. With myriads of men in movement and authority crumbling, the wonder is that there were so few excesses.<sup>1</sup>

In the latter half of 1917 I traveled twenty thousand miles in Russia without ever witnessing an act of violence. Our train crossing Russia and Siberia December 18-31 left Petrograd as it should, but at the first stop it was flooded with soldiers, most of whom accompanied us for the ensuing two weeks. In that time they had no chance to remove their clothing or wash or lie down or eat a square meal. Yet they endured all with patience, never invaded our coupé in which my comrade lay sick, and acted altogether in a very decent manner.

<sup>1</sup> In traveling from Rostov-on-the-Don to Moscow in the last days of November, 1917, I entered the following in my diary:

"Last night every car on the train, first- and second-class as well as third, was crowded. The coupés held as many as could sit down; the corridors were full of soldiers who would have to stand all night. The platforms and vestibules were packed, even the steps. Soldiers who had been waiting I don't know how many hours at a station could find no foothold on the train. Yet here we passengers in the 'International' sleeping-car were sitting warm in our coupés, eating our fill, sipping our tea, and lying down on a luxurious bed, while the soldiers who had been risking their lives for their country stood up all night in the cold. Several of the berths were unoccupied, the corridors were free, yet the soldiers did not break the glass in the door and let themselves in. They pounded often on the door and threatened to break in, *but still they did not*. Nothing whatever would have happened to them, I suppose, if they had forced the car door, but yet their respect for property was such they let us bourgeois enjoy in peace the luxury we enjoyed for no other reason than that we had the money to pay for it. The astonishing thing in this revolution is not the excesses of the masses, but that the masses in the absence of all restraining authority respect the rights of the possessing class as much as they do."



Leon Trotzky  
People's Commissary of War



Political manifestation in favor of the Soviet, July 1, 1917



## CHAPTER XV

### THE JULY RIOTS

ON July 16th, 17th and 18th there took place in Petrograd demonstrations and riots which opened a horrifying prospect of civil war and which had for a time a damaging effect upon the standing of the Bolshevik leaders. The facts as they may be gathered chiefly from the Cadet newspaper *Ryech* appear to be as follows.

Early in the evening of July 16th automobiles and trucks filled with armed soldiers and workmen and frequently carrying machine-guns appear on the streets under banners bearing the words "Down with the Capitalist Ministers," "All Power to the Workers' and Peasants' Soviets." Soldiers halt passing automobiles and compel the chauffeurs to drive them about the city. On the Nevsky and other main streets meetings are held denouncing the Provisional Government and the bourgeoisie. At several of the great factories strikes are called and the workers march toward the central parts of the city.

Meanwhile the garrison shows great uneasiness. At seven o'clock in the evening the Moscow Regiment decides "to come out into the streets at the first call." Whose call? Nobody knows. The Third Machine-Gunners think of leaving their barracks in a body, but are dissuaded by the Heavy Artillery Division located near by. The commander of the Grenadier Regiment reports at twenty min-



utes past eight that his soldiers are compelling their officers to come out with them into the street. The First Machine-Gun Regiment leaves its barracks in battle array. The Fourth Regiment of Don Cossacks ride out into the street. Soldiers in an armed automobile dash up to the quarters of the Semeonov Regiment and vainly urge the men to come out. A similar party visits an automobile unit, demanding trucks. When asked on whose order the trucks are to be furnished and for what purpose, the soldiers cannot give an answer. One of their number, a grenadier, explains that the Cossacks have lashed with whips a grenadier regiment at the front and that the Government intends to disband the guard regiments, incorporate their members into line regiments, and send them into the trenches. He concludes that the "capitalists" in the Cabinet must be ousted. When the automobilists insist on knowing what the soldiers mean to do with the trucks, they are told that the intention is to go to Mars Field and thence to the Tauride Palace. After that "we will see what to do."

At eight o'clock a band in automobiles with machine-guns descends upon the Warsaw Station intending to seize Kerensky, the Minister of War, before his departure for the front. They are twenty minutes too late. Soon after a party present themselves at the apartment of Prince Lvov, Prime Minister, demanding the surrender of the ministers with him and stating that they are requisitioning government automobiles. Tseretelli goes out to speak to them, but they have disappeared with his automobile.

With armed men "joy-riding" about the capital on one of the midsummer "white nights" for which this latitude is famed, clashes are inevitable. All that is needed is for busybodies to tell the occupants of one automobile that the occupants of some approaching automobile are "counter-revolutionary." In a casual don't-care spirit the machine-guns will be loosed, and there will be killed and wounded. In some places shooting occurs because street crowds and soldiers attempt to hold up these "joy-riders."

Shortly before midnight a party of anarchists seize the printing plant of the *Novoye Vremya*, stop the work on the newspaper, and cause to be printed an appeal of their own which says: "Let the people come out armed and demand the overthrow of the Provisional Government and the confiscation of all bourgeois newspapers. Comrades, our side has the physical strength, therefore let us without hesitation take into our hands all factories, shops, land, and other tools of production. . . . Comrades, forward without fear! Long live the social revolution!"

They leave the newspaper plant about two o'clock in the morning. At about nine o'clock the following evening bodies of soldiers and armed workers fill the streets about the Tauride Palace, now the headquarters of the soviets. At the demand of the crowd speakers from the Central Executive Committee address them. Tcheidze and Voitinsky, who urge them to disperse to their homes, are ill-received. Trotsky is heartily cheered when he says: "It is necessary to turn over all power to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Delegates. How-

ever, in order to attain this end it is necessary to use peaceful measures without resort to arms."

At midnight the Central and the Petrograd Executive Committees meet. Tseretelli and Dan insist that an attempt is being made to force the soviets at the point of the bayonet to take over all power in the country. Most significant, however, are the remarks of Kokoshkin:

"Criminal elements are involved in these disorders. The workers in the Petrograd post-office went on strike. A body of soldiers over forty years of age came to Kerensky demanding permission to return to their homes, but were refused. As soon as one goes into the street one sees that the slogans "All power to the Soviets" are an afterthought. It is not these slogans that have brought the crowd into the streets. Go out and you will hear that the street conversations are not about the rule of the Soviets, but about furloughs, about the Cadet ministers. . . . It is necessary to settle the post-office strike and to deal with the question of the forty-year-old soldiers, who are a counter-revolutionary element thinking only of their own skins.

Some light on the meaning of events may be gained from the minutes of the meeting of the Workers' Section of the Petrograd Soviet, for this is the meeting in which the Bolsheviki for the first time find themselves in the majority. When it becomes known that soldiers are marching upon the palace, it is moved that the meeting be adjourned and that the members scatter about the city in order to dissuade the workers from coming out. In the ensuing debate Kamenev (Bolshevik) argues, "Once the masses come out into the street, we must give their action a peaceful and organized character." Weinstein

(Menshevik) taunts the Bolsheviks with their inability to restrain the regiments from coming out. Trotsky insists that the day's events are the consequences of the Government's policy and of the mistakes on the part of those parties which see the counter-revolution threatened from the Left; while, as a matter of fact, it is coming on from the Right. Kamenev offers a resolution that the workers' section favors the taking over of all power by the All-Russian Congress of Soviets and that a committee of twenty-five members be elected which shall act in conjunction with the Petrograd and Central Executive Committees, while the rest of the members return to their districts and endeavor to give the movement a peaceful and organized character. After stormy debate the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries leave the hall and the resolution is passed by the Bolsheviks.

Much more alarming are the events of the following day. Bodies of troops arrive from Oranienbaum and Peterhof in order to demonstrate. Sailors, said to be 30,000 in number, come over from Kronstadt, the naval base, and march to the Bolshevik headquarters, where they call out Lenin for a speech, to Mars Field to visit the graves of the victims of the March Revolution and thence to the Tauride Palace. Regiments march and bodies of workers "from the Viborg side." Sometimes they are fired upon with rifles and machine-guns from the upper stories and roofs of the houses, and of course they reply with shots. Altogether 56 persons are killed and 650 wounded. The most serious incident is occasioned by shots directed at a troop of Cos-

sacks which have been ordered to the protection of the Tauride Palace. The shots come close to an infantry regiment just then debouching from a neighboring street. Supposing that the Cossacks are shooting at them, the soldiers fire a volley which results in 6 Cossacks killed and 25 wounded.

An immense concourse surround the Tauride Palace, where the Executive Committee is in conference with the Socialist ministers. Tchernov, Minister of Agriculture, on going out to pacify the crowd, is jeered, then seized and placed in an automobile, the declared intention being to hold him as a hostage. Trotsky, however, makes a speech which brings about Tchernov's release.

At about five o'clock the C. E. C. (Central Executive Committee) and the Peasants' E. C. (Executive Committee) meet, and ninety delegates from Petrograd factories and the Peterhof Soviet are admitted who "demand" that all power be taken over by the soviets and who denounce appeals of the C. E. C. which stigmatize the participants in the street demonstrations as "counter-revolutionists."

Meanwhile Government and Soviet have decided to disarm individuals in the streets and to stop the circulation of armed automobiles. In the evening cadets from the military schools, Cossacks, and other cavalymen are assembled in Palace Square and thence penetrate to strategic points in the city. But after all force plays only a small part in terminating the disorders, for they cease of themselves. It rains and water is deadly to demonstrations. In the words of Miliukov, uttered three weeks later before the Convention of the Cadet party:



Finally the government of non-resistance felt a physical necessity to defend itself. And the soviets, who came into a state of complete panic and had experienced several minutes equal to a long history, several minutes which brought them from the realization of their might to the thought of complete impotence—the soviets began to insist on the use of force. Force appeared. Hastily invalid soldiers came. Volunteers from the public began to organize. Finally came the Cossacks, and after the Cossacks—the insurrection having already died out itself, becoming a victim of its own ideal emptiness—came the regiments from the front. But they found no enemy to oppose. The rebellion was defeated by the force of its own absurdity before the armed force defeated it. . . .

Following the line which the Provisional Government and the dominant element in the soviets—Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries—promptly took, all Allied newspaper correspondents and writers have presented these July troubles as the outcome of a Bolshevik plot,—as, in a word, an abortive *coup* of a minority faction aiming to seize power. The impartial historian finds it difficult to accept this view, for the following reasons.

If the Bolsheviks had been lashing the masses and soldiers to rise they naturally would have used their organ the *Pravda*. But the files of the *Pravda* contain no hint of the coming storm. The issues of Saturday and Sunday, the fourteenth and fifteenth, are commonplace. The *Pravda* never appears on Monday. The issue of Tuesday contains no appeal to the people, not even an account of the stirring events of Monday. On the first page there is a blank space as if something had been set up, but at the last minute it had been decided not to print it.



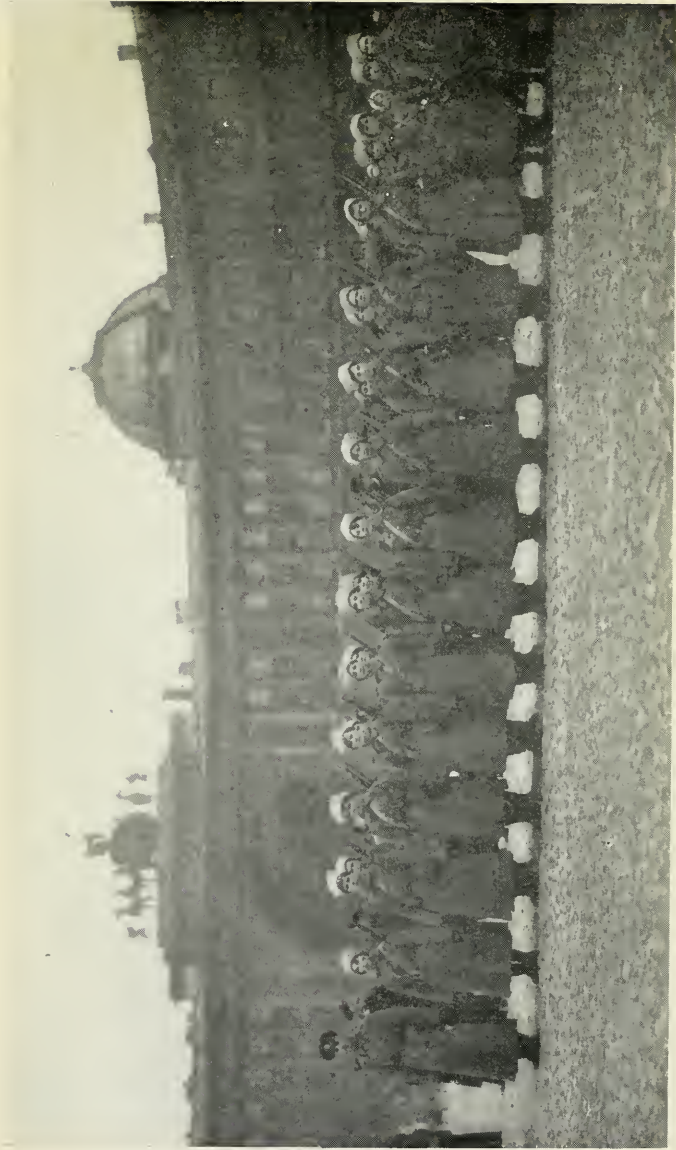
Lenin, Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and other Bolshevik leaders issued no appeals, did not urge the workers or the soldiers to seize the Government. On the contrary, Trotsky in his addresses from the steps of the Tauride Palace urged them to return to their homes and barracks.

When on June 23d during the first Convention of Soviets the Bolsheviks planned to conduct a demonstration the slogans of which should be "Down with the Capitalist Ministers!" "All Power to the Soviets!" the Convention adopted a resolution disapproving such a demonstration. Accordingly the Bolsheviks decided to give up their plan. The only element that protested this action was the Anarchists. They denounced the Bolsheviks as "traitors."

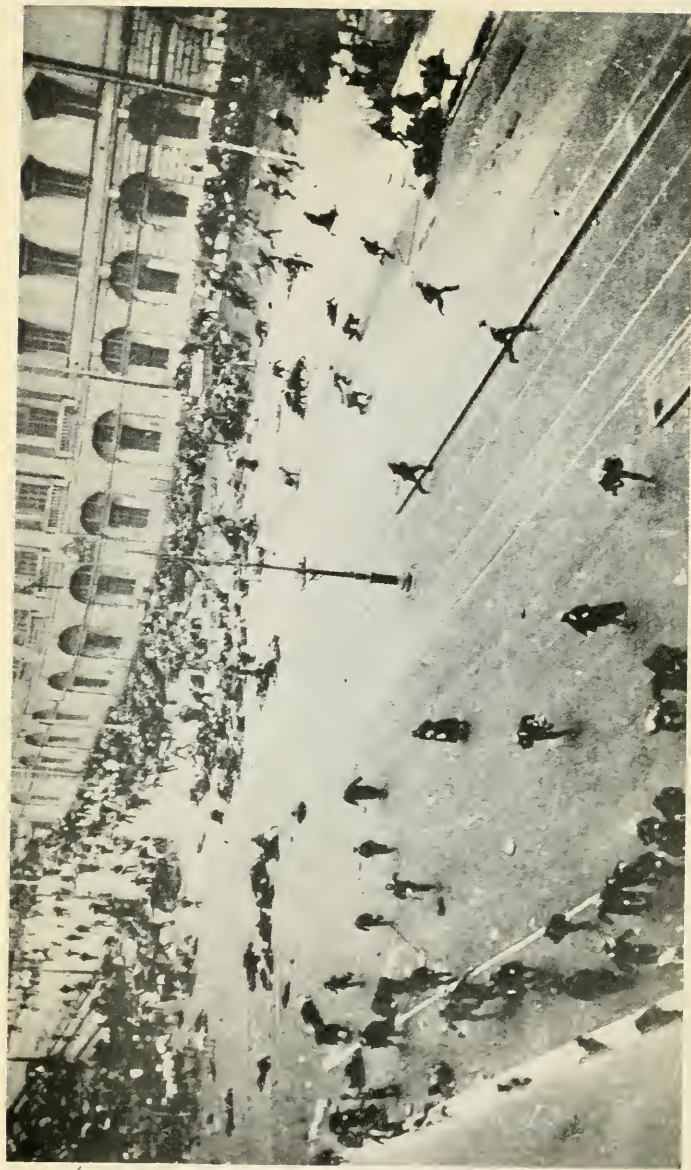
Had there been an organized plan to overthrow the Government attempts would have been made to seize strategic points—vital ganglia in a modern capital—telephone exchange, telegraph offices, railroad stations, banks, the ministries, and other government buildings. The fact is the only seizures of buildings during these days were the temporary taking over of a newspaper plant on two different occasions by anarchists and the capture of a small lighting-station, again by anarchists.

Mrs. Williams, who in her book "From Liberty to Brest-Litovsk" falls in with the Cadet theory that the July disorders were a Bolshevik clutch at power, in an article she published in *Ryech* at the time testifies to the innocence of her Bolshevik colleagues in the Petrograd Duma. She writes:

An appeal to the population must be issued in the name



Woman's Battalion of Death guarding the Winter Palace



The beginning of the July uprising in Petrograd

of the City Duma. The Bolsheviks begin to object. From all sides men shout at them: "Why do you object? Are you for what is now taking place in the streets?"

No, no. They also are against it. But it is necessary to know what is going on. It is difficult to understand what the Bolsheviks fear. It is most likely that they became confused, they do not know whose voices are heard on the streets, their own or alien hostile voices. They simply became baffled. And suppose the troops are brought out on the streets by the counter-revolution? They have visions of it everywhere.

The fundamental situation becomes outlined still more indubitably—that not a single one of the political parties represented in the City Duma wishes to accept the responsibility for that blood which has been spilled during this night in the streets of Petrograd.

A short appeal to the population is adopted by the City Duma unanimously, by all parties, from the Cadets to the Bolsheviks inclusive. "In the name of the happiness and welfare of our own country" the newly elected Duma appeals to citizens to maintain calm, not to "spill blood."

Three months later, in an addendum to his pamphlet "Can the Bolsheviks Hold the Governmental Power?" Lenin characterizes the July flurry as "the beginning of a civil war which was held back by the Bolsheviks within the limits of a beginning."

At the end of July before a joint meeting of the Central Executive Committee and the Peasants' Executive Committee Trotsky said:

Already on the July 15th, while we were having a meeting of the Central Committee, we heard that an outbreak was being planned. This news spread through all the regiments like a spark. In spite of the fact that we were

well informed we did not know the source of these rumors. I affirm that the sailors and the workers did not know what was going on around the Tauride Palace.

I made a speech there and I noticed that near the entrance was standing a crowd of scoundrels. I spoke about this to Comrade Lunacharsky and Comrade Riazanov. I told them that these are members of the "Okhrana," who are attempting to break into the Tauride Palace. When Tchernov came out these scoundrels behind the backs of the masses attempted to arrest Tchernov. When I ran out to them I noticed that there was a group of about ten people engaged in this dirty work. I could identify them in a crowd of ten thousand. When I attempted to tell this to the masses it was disclosed that not a single one of the workers or sailors knew them. The band scattered and Tchernov returned to the palace. Nobody knew about Kerensky's departure to the front and the attempt to arrest him could have come only from the front. The armed masses did not make an attempt to seize any political institution. If this point of view is accepted, then there was no armed rebellion. This proves that the movement was elementary and that counter-revolutionary elements got mixed up in it.

We are accused of creating the moods of the masses. This is not true; we are only attempting to formulate them.

The masses took up arms because they knew about the counter-revolutionary attempts.

Together with you we consider that this was a mistake. From the same platform Comrade Voitinsky (Menshevik) said that the Bolsheviks warned the masses against coming out. But when the masses came out we understood that it is our duty to introduce orderliness in this movement. We said to these masses: "Though your slogans are just, do not come out but return to your homes."

Later Trotsky writes: <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Russian Revolution*, pp. 25-27.



The Central Executive Committee, elected at the June Congress and depending for support on the more backward provinces, was pushing the Petrograd Soviet more and more into the background and was taking into its own hands even the conduct of purely Petrograd affairs. A conflict was inevitable. The workers and soldiers were exerting pressure from below, giving violent expression to their discontent with the official policy of the Soviet, and demanded from our party more drastic action. We considered that in view of the still backward condition of the provinces the hour for such action had not yet struck.

In the ranks of our party, the attitude toward the events of July 16th 18th was perfectly definite. On the one hand there was the fear that Petrograd might become isolated from the more backward provinces; on the other hand there was the hope that an active and energetic intervention of Petrograd might save the situation. The party propagandists in the lower ranks went hand in hand with the masses and carried on an uncompromising agitation.

There was still some hope that a demonstration of the revolutionary masses might break down the obstinate doctrinarism of the Coalitionists and compel them to realize at last that they could only maintain themselves in power if they completely broke with the bourgeoisie. Contrary to what was said and written at the time in the bourgeois press, there was no intention whatever in our party of seizing the reins of power by means of an armed rising. It was only a revolutionary demonstration which broke out spontaneously, though guided by us politically. It was from the front that troops had to be fetched. The entire July days was to gain time so as to enable Kerensky to draw strategy of Tseretelli, Tchernov, and others, during those "reliable" troops into Petrograd. Delegation after delegation entered the Tauride Palace, which was surrounded by a huge armed crowd, and demanded a complete break with the bourgeoisie, energetic measures of social reform, and



the commencement of peace negotiations. We, Bolsheviki, met every new detachment of demonstrators, either in the street or in the palace, with harangues, calling on them to be calm, and assuring them that with the masses in their present mood the compromise-mongers would be unable to form a new coalition ministry. The men of Kronstadt were particularly determined, and it was only with difficulty that we could keep them within the bounds of a bare demonstration. On July 17th the demonstration assumed a still more formidable character—this time under the direct leadership of our party.

Among the factors responsible for the events of July 16th to 18th the following should be taken into consideration. This was a group of soldiers forty years old and over who were anxious to get back to their villages in time for the harvest. During the meeting of the Petrograd Soviet on July 1st, which took place in the Alexandrinsky Theater and at which the offensive was discussed, a great crowd of these soldiers came to the theater with placards on which was inscribed, "The army needs bread as well as shells." This mob demanded that they be sent home. They had a similar demonstration, which was not organized by any party, on July 15th. The next day a delegation of thirty of these soldiers called on Kerensky and behaved in a most insolent manner during their interview. At the same time, among the troops in Petrograd there was a great deal of dissatisfaction and unrest. When, on taking up the reins, the Provisional Government issued its declaration, the seventh clause was that the Petrograd garrison, which participated in the Revolution, should not be disarmed and should remain in Petrograd. There is no doubt that the ordering of the machine-

gun regiment to the front has connection with the fact that the machine-gun regiment was the first to come out on the streets on July 16th and that it sent delegates to other regiments and to factories to foment a demonstration. Moreover, the soldiers were roused by stories of the regiments which were disbanded at the front having been fired on and whipped by Cossacks.

There was also a great deal of discontent among the workmen in Petrograd. A strike broke out in the Petrograd post-office on July 16th, the day of the beginning of the disorders. There was a strike in the Sormov factory and a strike was prevented in the Putilov factory only by the efforts of the trade unions.

## CHAPTER XVI

### “GERMAN AGENTS”

THE law-and-order group, finding that the ideas of the Bolshevik wing of the Social-Democratic party are spreading like wildfire among the factory-hands and the soldiers, make now a most determined attempt to hamstring its propaganda. The buildings used by the Bolsheviks are cut off from telephone service. The district headquarters of the Social Democrats, Mensheviks as well as Bolsheviks, is raided. The furniture is smashed and the funds of the party are seized. Cossacks descend upon the great rifle factory at Sestroretsk near Petrograd, arrest the factory committee, and seize a thousand rifles in the hands of the workers. On July 25th the Government issues an order reëstablishing capital punishment for certain military offenses at the front. Three days later the Bolshevik organ *Pravda* is closed and its edition for soldiers, *The Trench Pravda*, is suppressed. The commanders of the army are ordered to close all similar newspapers. Finally Trotsky, Lunacharsky, Kamenev and a considerable number of their followers are jailed. Madame Kollontai is placed under domiciliary arrest, while the only reason why Lenin and Zinoviev are not put under lock and key is that they are too clever at hiding.

The charge against them is of having instigated “armed action against the authority of the govern-

ment established by the people." However, the endeavor to fix on them responsibility for the July disorders utterly breaks down. Their cases are never even brought to trial. Kamenev is released on August 17th, Lunacharsky on August 21st, while Trotsky remains in jail until September 17th. Imagine how this flash-in-the-pan lends weight to the Bolshevik contention that the masses might as well hope to gather figs from thistles as to expect a government more than half bourgeois to give them the economic reforms they desire.

The charge that the July troubles were a Bolshevik attempt to overthrow the Government at once finds credence among the propertied, but wins no vogue among the soldiers and proletarians, who understand very well what the Bolsheviks' position is. Far more serious in blackening them with the masses is the charge that they are on the pay-roll of the Kaiser.

Bourtsev, a veteran revolutionist, famous as the unmasker of the notorious Okhrana terrorist-spy Azev in the *Ryech* of July 20th declares:

Comrades arriving from Sweden have acquainted us with the net of German spies which exists in Stockholm, Christiania, Copenhagen, and Haparanda. From there German agents by hundreds are being sent into Russia instructed to agitate for a peace at any price, to stir up rebellions, to carry on a struggle with the Provisional Government, and to fan the class struggle. They are showered with German gold for these purposes. Those bound for Russia are recommended to go hand in hand with the Leninites, to join their organization, and to act in accordance with its spirit. The German General Staff, according to the words of its own

agents, does not see in Russia better allies for itself than the Bolsheviks.

In Germany from the very beginning of the war, even before, when it was only in preparation, the German Government created special societies to work against the Russian Army and the Russian Government. Among other things it utilized for this purpose the services of the well-known renegade Parvus. Member of the Russian Social-Democratic party yesterday, to-day he has become the zealous executor of the plans of the German Government and its General Staff.

His activity Parvus spreads everywhere; in Germany, Austria, Italy, Bulgaria, Turkey. Just as before the war, so during the war, he everywhere found for himself willing and active assistants, as for example, the former member of the Second Duma Zurabov, Perazieh, and L. Trotsky—all three of whom at present play a prominent part in the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates in Petrograd, also of Kolontai, Koslovsky . . . and many others.

Thanks in particular to Lenin, Zinoviev, Trotsky *et al.*, during these accursed days of July 16th to 17th, Wilhelm realized his hopes: he wrecked our war loan, he brought mourning into hundreds of homes in Petrograd, he paralyzed the life of the capital and by doing this he delivered a blow against the country and the army.

During these days Lenin with his comrades cost us no less than a good-sized plague or cholera.

Trotsky promptly counters with a letter in *Izvestia* in which he shows that he himself was the one who first exposed to Russian Socialists the connection of Parvus with the German Government and that he had done this in the columns of a Russian newspaper as early as November, 1914.

Then Alexinsky, a former member of the Duma,

prints a long series of sixty-four telegrams between Russian Bolsheviki and their confrères in Stockholm and Christiania. Most of these are obviously of the most innocent character, since they relate to personal and party matters. Much is sought to be made of telegrams sent by one Ganetzky (Fürstenberg) a Polish Socialist in Stockholm, who was maintaining a personal and political telegraphic correspondence with Lenin and other Bolshevik leaders, to a Mrs. Sumenson in Petrograd. They press for payment for consignments of drugs, Nestle's Food, pencils, etc. These commercial "wires" may cover a dark plot, but it is noteworthy that in them it is always a case of getting money *out of Russia* instead of getting money *into* Russia, as would certainly be the case if the Bolshevik leaders are being paid by the German Government.

The Army Intelligence secured on May 11th a statement from an ensign of a Siberian regiment, Yermolenko by name. He testifies that he was released from a German prison camp on condition of propagating the idea of an early peace with Germany among the soldiers of the Russian front. Officers of the German general staff informed him that a like propaganda is being carried on by Lenin, who is under instructions to undermine the confidence of the Russian people in the Provisional Government.

On the afternoon of July 17th Pereverzev, Minister of Justice, communicates to eighty delegates of the Petrograd military units this and other documents in his possession which appear to incriminate the Bolshevik leaders, and then turns them over to



the press. He requests the soldier delegates to tell their regiments about the contents of the documents. In his later exculpatory letter he says:

I realized that the publication of this information was certain to create in the soldiers of the garrison a state of mind which would oblige them to abandon their attitude of neutrality. In throwing against the rebels all the troops of Petrograd who had not joined in the rebellion, in inspiring them with the fury which is necessary to a battle to the death, I saw the means of saving the situation.

The bold step of the minister had an effect in rallying the soldiers to the side of the Provisional Government. For the moment the blackening of the character of Lenin and Trotsky was successful. The Soviet, however, was furious, the other ministers were disgusted with the hasty publication of unverified statements and by noon of the next day Prince Lvov required the resignation of Pereverzev. He was succeeded by Zaroudny, who at first, under impulsion from his subordinates, proceeded against the Bolshevik leaders with much energy, but later was obliged to let the cases drop because nothing incriminating could be found. At first the political opponents of the Bolsheviks in the soviets supported the prosecutions. The Central Executive Committee and the Executive Committee of the Peasants' Soviets a week after the riots resolved that:

Whereas, the Bolshevik organizations have carried on among the soldiers and workers an irresponsible demagogic agitation, which ended by an open rebellion against the will of the revolutionary majority, aiding by this in the

creation of civil war and counter-revolution within the country and defeat at the front; and that such actions are a crime against the people and the revolution . . .

We consider that Lenin and Zinoviev have absolutely no right to evade trial and we demand from the Bolsheviks an immediate categorical condemnation of such behavior of their leaders.

Lenin and Zinoviev publish in reply a letter in which they say in substance:

Pereverzev openly admits that he let loose unconfirmed charges in order to "raise the fury" of the soldiers against our party. Pereverzev is out, but who will guarantee that the new Minister of Justice will not stoop to like methods?

The counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie is attempting to create a new Dreyfus case. It believes just as much in our "espionage" as the leaders of the Russian reaction who created the Beylis case believed that the Jews drink children's blood. There are no guarantees of justice in Russia at the present moment.

Within a fortnight it became apparent that the case against the Bolshevik leaders was a "frame up" and protests began to appear. On August 9th *Izvestia*, although under Menshevik and S.-R. control, said:

Repressions, arrests, searches are taking place.

This repressive activity until now has been too little directed toward the Right, where in everybody's view is ripening a counter-revolutionary conspiracy, and it has seized in a most arbitrary manner victims of the Left, interpreting participation in the organization of the rebellion of July 16th to 18th in the broadest possible sense. We could cite

a long list of names of individuals on the Left, whose arrest, in the eyes of the widest masses of the workers', soldiers', and peasants' democracy, is nothing but an act of political vengeance. At the same time there are individuals of the Right, known lackeys of the old régime, known conspirators against the Revolution, who are not only at liberty but are proudly posing as new saviors of the Fatherland, and are besmirching with mud everything that is honest in revolutionary Russia.

The government has found and is finding sufficient force to suppress that press of the Left, which, in the name of the salvation of the country, it finds harmful during the present exceptional time. But the *Narodnaya Gazeta*, *Zhivoye Slovo*, and their ilk, dirty sheets from day to day sowing lies and slanders and openly undermining the newborn revolutionary authority,—why are these organs of political swindle and counter-revolutionary conspiracy allowed to publish articles which are blows against revolutionary Russia? . . .

By the middle of August the revulsion of popular feeling was so evident that Tseretelli, lately Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, said before the Central Executive Committee: "The wholesale charges against all participants in the events of July 16th to 18th of being German spies, and moving to the second place the unquestionable crime—a rebellion against the revolutionary organs of authority, this is a great mistake."

Henceforth, it is only outside of Russia that intelligent men believe that the Bolshevik leaders are German agents.<sup>1</sup> In many conversations I held with Russian bourgeoisie in the autumn and winter of

<sup>1</sup> The questions raised later by the famous "Sisson Documents" will be considered in a subsequent volume.

1917 these charges were often mentioned by them, but when I asked the question, "Do *you* believe that Lenin and Trotsky are German agents?" I never once obtained an affirmative reply.

## CHAPTER XVII

### KERENSKY

ON July 14th the Cadet members resigned from the Provisional Government, alleging that they could not approve the conceding of an autonomous government to the Ukraine. However, as Prince Lvov admitted to newspaper men two days later, "The Ukrainian problem is only an excuse, the real cause [of resignation] must be sought deeper,—in the differences of points of view between the socialists and the bourgeois."

The retirement of the Cadets together with the riots in Petrograd July 16th to 18th led the Provisional Government on July 20th to vote to carry out the program proposed by the socialist ministers. The chief feature of this program was the taking of the land from the gentry without compensation. The bills introduced by Tchernov, Minister of Agriculture, did not contemplate that the land should be made over to the peasants, but that henceforth its title should be vested in the nation. Only the right of use was granted to the peasant; as soon as he ceased to till it in person he lost all right in it.

Prince Lvov, who would not countenance this attack upon the property rights of the class to which he belonged, resigned the next day, alleging that he could not accept Tchernov's land proposals. Kerensky, who until the May crisis had been Min-

ister of Justice and since then Minister of War, undertook to form a new government. The development of suspicion and hostility between the propertied and the working people made his task well-nigh insuperable. Astrov, Kishkin, and Nabukov, members of the Cadet party who were invited by Kerensky to take portfolios, joined in a letter in which they laid down the conditions of their entering the Cabinet. No ministers should be responsible to the soviets. No committees should interfere in the business of government. "Dual authority" should be abolished and a decisive struggle should be carried on with "anarchistic elements." All reform of the system of government should be left to the Constituent Assembly. There should be absolute unity with the Allies in the war and strict discipline should be introduced into the army.

Kerensky replied reassuringly and on August 6th the "Save the Revolution" Government was launched. It included the Social Revolutionaries Kerensky, Savinkov, Lebedev, Avksentiev and Tchernov; the Social Democrats Skobelev, Nikitin, and Prokopovich; the Socialist-Populist Peshekanov; the Cadets Kokoshkin, Oldenburg, Yurienev, and Kartashev; the Radical Efremov, and three Independents, Zaroudny, Tereshchenko, and Nekrassov.

Here, perhaps, is the place to consider the character and rôle of the man who more than any other embodied the ideals of the first Russian Revolution and who, for two or three months in 1917, was the most conspicuous personage in Russia.

Alexander Feodorovitch Kerensky was born thirty-six years before the Revolution, in Simbirsk,



one of the Volga towns. His father was principal of the secondary school in which the two Oulianovs—Lenin and his elder brother Alexander—studied. Although but five years old at the time, he vibrated to the feeling of horror and dismay which swept through the town when news came of the hanging of Alexander for conspiring to assassinate the most reactionary of tsars.

In 1889 the father, probably on account of his political liberalism, was transferred from Simbirsk to Tashkent, so that the lad was prepared for the university in the chief city of Turkestan. Between 1898 and 1904 Kerensky studied law in Petrograd and became an ardent champion of the ideas of the Social Revolutionary party. After he took up the practice of law he had much to do with the defense of the radical members of the Dumas, whom the Government wished to send to Siberia.

His success in the courts gave him a name for courage and eloquence in defense of advanced ideas so that in 1913 at the age of thirty-two he was elected to the Fourth Duma from one of the towns in the province of Saratov. The Socialist parties being illegal, he and ten others of his party took the name of Laborites (*Troudoviki* or Group of Toil), whose ostensible policy was to better the lot of the workers on the economic side only. Ere long he captained the group and became known as a powerful debater. He spoke passionately, pouring out a torrent of invective at the top of his voice, and accompanying it with violent and unrestrained gestures. Such speaking exhausted him and he would descend from the tribune shaking and drenched in perspiration.

No one could accuse him of want of daring. On one occasion when a question referring to a political murder was being discussed Kerensky rose up in the Duma and said: "I may freely express my opinion with reference to the question under debate, for it is known to all of you that both my political convictions and the principles of the party of which I am a member recognize the right of using terror as a political weapon against our enemies in authority and justify the assassination of tyrants." The railroading of the Bolsheviki members of this Duma to Siberia left Kerensky the chief spokesman of the factory workers. In the industrial districts "on the Viborg side" of the Neva, and in the shipyards and iron-works, "What has Alexander Feodorovitch said?" became the political touchstone.

From a certain curious document we obtain a very objective idea of Kerensky's activities and aims during a calamitous period of the war. Among the Secret-Service (*Okhrana*) papers brought to light by the Revolution was a report addressed by the head of the Petrograd branch of the *Okhrana* to the Minister of the Interior in August, 1915. It says:

The strikes with a political background which are at present occurring among the workmen, and also the ferment among them, are the result of the revolutionary activity of members of the Social-Democratic and Labor parties in the Duma, and especially of the leader of the latter, the lawyer Kerensky. The revolutionary propaganda of Kerensky has expressed itself in the watchword "Struggle for power and for a Constituent Assembly," and has led to a systematic discrediting of the Government in the eyes of the masses. To ensure the success of their demands, Kerensky has recommended the workmen to im-

provised factory groups for the formation of councils of workers' and soldiers' delegates on the model of 1905, with the object of impelling the movement in a definite direction, at the given moment, with the cry for a Constituent Assembly, which should take into its hands the defense of the country. To promote this agitation, Kerensky is circulating among the workmen rumors that he is receiving from the provinces numerous letters demanding that he should overthrow the Romanov dynasty and take its power into his own hand.<sup>1</sup>

Such testimony explains the success with which this young lawyer rode the storm during the historic days of the Revolution. His rôle in this crisis was one in which he may well feel pride. As to this I will cite certain passages by Princess Cantacuzène, granddaughter of General Grant, who will not be suspected of bias in favor of a revolutionist:

Singing, howling mobs of workmen and regiments of soldiers poured into the Tauride Palace and its garden, purporting to be friends of the Duma; but their wild shouts and violent behavior showed them to be unreliable and highly inflammable, ready for anything.

[Kerensky] with his then sincere enthusiasm undertook the task of quelling this bedlam. He managed to do so amazingly well; and that the Duma was not massacred, it owed to his eloquence. Having a name and personality well known to the masses, and a large sense of patriotism also, he had been given over completely to the mission of handling the rabble. Time after time, during fifty-two hours, pale, uncombed, unshaved, his clothes in disorder, he was pushed forward; and he shouted and gesticulated himself into a state of exhaustion. He always finally succeeded in taming those whom he addressed. Then he would col-

<sup>1</sup> Wilcox, *Russia's Ruin*, p. 192.

lapse with fatigue and be cared for, until he was sufficiently restored to go on with his special work again.<sup>1</sup>

After telling how Kerensky saved the hated tsarist ministers, Soukhomlinov and Protopopov, from being torn to pieces by guaranteeing that these men should not escape punishment for their crimes, the princess goes on to say:

Senators, members of the Council of the Empire, members of the ex-Court and the Government, about two hundred of them, lived in these crowded rooms for five or six long days. The prisoners were kept constantly on the *qui vive*, as each morning and evening Kerensky made a tour of the rooms, chose out a few men to be liberated, and a few more to be sent to the Fortress. At one side of the impromptu prison could be heard the discussions and the movements of the Duma's members; while from the other direction came the roar of bedlam let loose, for in the Catherine Hall the deputations of soldiers and workmen held forth—criticizing, threatening, acclaiming; and demanding reports of all that was being done, and the right to veto or approve every measure presented. Many times the lives of all occupants of the palace were in danger; and always the situation was saved by Kerensky's eloquence and his clever handling of his clients.<sup>2</sup>

As Minister of Justice in the first Lvov Cabinet Kerensky won golden opinions by his patriotism, moderation, and lack of personal vanity. He handled questions concerned with the ex-sovereigns and members of the old régime with a generosity and dignity that won praise from his political opponents. He showed himself a consummate leader of his own

<sup>1</sup> *Revolutionary Days*, p. 132.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 149.

party and managed its unruly elements with extraordinary skill. He uttered the noble sentiment "The Revolution will astound the world by its magnanimity," and did his best to make it true. He abolished the death penalty. The refusal to appeal to force was, in fact, the most characteristic feature of the first three months of the Revolution. The Provisional Government reasoned with every one whether mutinous soldier, anarchist workman, or separatist town.

After Kerensky became Minister of War the Revolution for a few weeks became incarnate in this one man. He gave vivid and plangent expression to all that was noble and idealistic in it. He became the bearer of the message which revolutionary Russia seemed seeking to communicate to humanity. Transfigured by the vision he saw and filled with faith in his mission, he wrought miracles of word-magic. A seasoned Russian journalist writes thus of Kerensky's eloquence:

Listening to him, you feel that all your nerves are drawn toward him and bound together with his nerves in one nexus. It seems that you yourself are speaking; that on the platform it is not Kerensky but you who are facing the crowd and dominating its thoughts and feelings; that it and you have only one heart, wide as the world and as beautiful. Kerensky has spoken and gone. You ask yourself how long he has spoken—an hour or three minutes? On your honour you cannot say, for time and space had vanished. . . . When he stretches out his hands to you—nervous, supple, fiery, all quivering with the enthusiasm of prayer which seizes him—you feel that he touches you,

grasps you with those hands, and irresistibly draws you to himself.<sup>1</sup>

As in June he moved along the front, endeavoring to inspire patriotism and fighting spirit in the Russian troops, his passing was that of a comet. Crowds waited for hours to catch a glimpse of him. Soldiers ran for miles after his motor-car in the hope of shaking his hand or kissing the hem of his garment. In those hectic weeks of speaking before the men in uniform, hectoring, pleading, arguing, he labored like a Titan and men marveled that his frail body could stand it all.

Although for reasons already shown the Galician offensive, which began so brilliantly, ended in disaster and shame, its breakdown casts no reflection on the power of Kerensky's eloquence.

Of this we have fullest acknowledgment in the words of an enemy. Writing some time after the Tarnopol setback, a German journalist declares in the *Kölnische Zeitung*:

In what we hear Kerensky is always in the foreground. His oratorical gift must give him stupendous power. This frail and delicate man is a magician in words. . . . Soldiers have told me again to-day, but I had heard of it often enough before. I had heard it from the people of the occupied Galician territory, who had seen Kerensky and listened to him when he flung his fiery speeches into the masses of soldiers in the towns. In Tarnapol, in Kalusz, and in Stanislaw I was told about it. The statements of the front soldiers, who saw him among themselves, close behind the positions, nay, in the front trenches, confirm it; he was the impulse to the new attack, the tireless inciter,

<sup>1</sup> Cited by Wilcox in *Russia's Ruin*, p. 197.



working with the power and sweep of his word. . . . By the power of this one man . . . and by comprehensive and indefatigable propaganda, the fighting spirit was generated.<sup>1</sup>

After the ghastly Galician *debacle* Kerensky was another man. Faith in himself and in the triumph of his ideas was gone. No longer could he feel that all that was best in the Revolution was following him. To rid himself of the Bolshevik leaders who were rapidly winning over the urban masses, he departed from his principles by reintroducing administrative arrests and deportations. On August 15th he signed a decree which "in order to put an end to the activity of those individuals who wish to utilize the freedom given by the revolution to all citizens only for the purpose of doing irreparable harm to the cause of the revolution and to the very existence of the Russian state" gave the Minister of War and the Minister of Interior the discretion, by mutual agreement between them:

(1) To order the placing under guard individuals whose activity especially threatens the defense of the country, its internal safety, and the freedom won by the revolution.

(2) To order individuals mentioned in paragraph No. 1 to leave the limits of the Russian State within a definite period. On condition of non-departure of these individuals or their wilful return they are to be confined under guard in accordance with paragraph No. 1 of this decree.

This measure, coming on top of the arrests of Bolshevik leaders and the suppression of Bolshevik newspapers after the July riots, cost him his popu-

<sup>1</sup> Cited by Wilcox in *Russia's Ruin*, p. 202.

larity with labor, which henceforth regarded him as a political enemy whom it would be justified in overthrowing at the first opportunity. Nevertheless, he did not start early enough or go far enough in repression to gain the confidence of the propertied.

In this national crisis Kerensky's temper and policies were such as to appeal to a middle class, but, alas, there was as yet no considerable middle class in Russia. So all the propertied and most of the representatives of the Allies pinned their hopes to Kornilov, the "strong man," while the masses abandoned him for Lenin and Trotsky, who promised to give them *at once*, without waiting for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, what they most longed for—peace, land, and bread. When the test came Kerensky had no popularity whatever.

The propertied classes of Russia hate Kerensky because he, a moderate and law-and-order man, let slip by the golden moment when there was still a chance for a *coup* on behalf of Property. He did nothing to gag the Bolshevik leaders until it was too late. He restrained the reactionary generals from employing the still "reliable" regiments and divisions to dissolve the army committees, shoot mutineers, crush the soviets, disarm the workers, put Petrograd and the munition-factories under martial law, and decimate the peasants who were swarming upon the estates of the *pomieshtchiks*. Perhaps if these things had been done in May the proletarian revolution might have been averted. But two or three months were lost and then it was too late. The process of decomposition had advanced so far

that in Russia there was left no formidable obedience-compelling power save the will of the politically conscious section of the common people.

The time came when even Kerensky, romanticist and idealist, awoke to the realities of the situation. In the course of the last interview he gave as Minister-President he uttered the prophetic words: "Remember, this is not a political revolution. It is not like the French Revolution. It is *an economic revolution*, and there will be necessary in Russia a profound revaluation of classes. And it is a very complicated process for all the different nationalities in Russia. Remember that the French Revolution took five years and that France is the size of one of our provincial districts. No, the Russian Revolution is not over—it is just beginning."

"Society" hated Kerensky for "truckling" to the soviets, so the habitués of the salons set afloat all manner of malicious gossip about his mode of life in the Winter Palace. They said that he had divorced his wife in order to marry an actress. They said that he used the tsar's carriages and motors, drank his champagne, feasted off his gold plate, and slept in his bed. They said that he kept his ministers awake there by singing grand-opera airs at unseemly hours, that in conferences he was sometimes abrupt and irritable,—as who would not be who was on the verge of a nervous breakdown?

The Allied diplomats and military missions, who absorbed the drawing-room tea-table talk and were interested only in Russia's fighting, fell in with this shallow view and little dreamed that the man was in the grasp of a social tornado.



Scene from one of the July Bolshevik meetings  
Inscription on banner "Long Live Socialism! Long Live the Third International!"



A. F. Kerensky  
Prime Minister of the Provisional Government

On assuming power, Lenin is said to have stated to the representative of the *Matin*: "You may be sure that, whatever may be the vicissitudes of the struggle, we must always in the end prove the stronger, because boldness is on our side, whereas Kerensky—" here Lenin shrugged his shoulders disdainfully—"is nobody. He has never done anything and he is always vacillating. He was a partisan of Kornilov and had him arrested. He was an opponent of Trotsky and he allowed him his liberty."

It is too soon yet to know whether or not this contemptuous judgment is just. Already time has shown that the drawing-room people and the Allied diplomats and officers, who might have held up Kerensky's government until the Constituent Assembly met, but who were all for Kornilov whose ill-starred attempt turned the masses to Bolshevism, made a terrible mistake. It may be that time will show the same of the workers and soldiers who abandoned Kerensky for Lenin.



## CHAPTER XVIII

### GROWING ANARCHY

**A**FTER the dam is broken it is not long before the restrained waters are in motion. Once the powerful centralized organization of police and Cossacks under the Romanovs has been shattered, the long-curbed desires of the poverty-stricken peasants for the land they have been tilling for the lords, and of the robbed toilers for treatment as men, give rise to headstrong actions. As early as May 3d the Assistant Minister of the Interior calls upon provincial and county commissaries to report daily to the Militia (Police) Department on the following subjects: Agrarian disorders and all kinds of violations of landed property rights, attempted unlawful actions against landowners and lessees, unlawful plowing, arson, cutting of forests, stealing of farm implements, stealing of live stock, destruction of boundary lines, etc.; about all kinds of disorders in the factories, such as lock-outs and strikes, with reasons therefor, violations of the rights of the workingmen or the employers, exceptional cases of propaganda against the new government and its officials, inciting of one part of the population against another on national, religious, or party grounds, any other violations of public order committed by crowds, cases in which the local authorities of the new government are prevented from exercising its authority, lawless actions of individuals and groups such as arrests

and endeavors to prevent the liberation of those arrested without due cause.

The commissaries are furthermore instructed to report about measures taken to stop such violations.

On the same day the Minister-President, Prince Lvov, issues to the Commissaries of the provinces a circular order which clearly reveals the growing difficulties of the privileged classes in asserting their property rights:

The Provisional Government has lately received a number of personal statements by telegraph regarding the arrests and arbitrary actions of certain village societies and village committees which prevent the landowners, large as well as small, from doing their duty for the state by sowing their lands. As I cannot tolerate acts of violence against individuals and the wilful solution of the land problem by that part of the population which is concerned with this problem, it is herewith suggested to you that through the provincial committees, county commissaries, and county organizations, you arrange to notify the people as widely as possible as to the wrongfulness of depriving any one of liberty save by order of a court, as well as inform them of all the government orders relative to the safeguarding of all food supplies. It is your duty, with the support of all the organized local forces, to prevent any high-handed decisions which may ruin the unity which is necessary for the strengthening of the new state order. You are requested to use the entire force of the law in order to stop the commission of violence or robbery. In accordance with the numerous instructions that you are the chief representative of the authority of the Provisional Government in the province, you are authorized to use all measures which you, together with the committee, will find necessary.

When the tsarist machine broke down, the em-

ployers for the first time in their lives found themselves without any means of coercing their men. You still could telephone to the police station, but the new chiefs of "militia" soon learned not to fly in the face of the local soviet. An employer said to me with bitterness:

"The commissary who represents the Central Government here is a former school-teacher and often calls upon us to yield this or that point 'in the interest of public order' or 'to avert grave disturbances!' So nowadays we don't consider what are our legal rights; we consider only how to avoid trouble."

Arthur Bullard tells of a paper manufacturer he met for whom the Revolution was summed up vividly in one incident:

The newly formed "Shop Committee" in his works invaded his luxuriously furnished private office one morning and told him to get out. They wanted to hold a meeting there. They made themselves at ease in his sanctum, they trampled with their heavy boots on his choice Bokhara rug—they even spat on it. The thing which impressed him most was that they had lost fear of him.<sup>1</sup>

Late in May, Kutler, the great manufacturer, speaking at a national convention of the Cadet party, laid the palpable disorganization of production to the excesses committed by the workers against the factory administration. He said:

It is necessary to note the mass removal of individuals who were at the head of industrial enterprises, directors, and managers of shops and factories. How great this re-

<sup>1</sup> *The Russian Pendulum*, p. 74.

removal is can be seen, for instance, from the Ural mining industry, where there exist over twenty large mining-plants. At the present time in these plants there remain *only four managers* who have not been removed. This removal of managers is taking place also in the oil-industry, and I received only to-day information that this removal is becoming a general rule. The same is widely practised in other localities, in Petrograd, in Moscow, in the South, and throughout the country in general. Together with the removal of individuals managing the business, there are also mass removals of secondary technicians, engineers, foremen, etc., who are sometimes not replaced and sometimes replaced through selection, by the workers, of individuals not equal to the job. As for the undisturbed members of the factory administration, they have lost all their influence, all their authority over the workers. The slightest reproof, the slightest complaint that the work is not done right leads to threats and violence. As a result, discipline and order in the factories are disappearing.

An article in the *Izvestia* of June 13th declares :

. . . All the villages are in a state of fermentation, there are no uniform established relations. In some places the peasants help themselves to the land of the proprietors, they take off war prisoners and other workers employed on estates, and they seize the equipment; in other places the proprietors continue charging the peasants an absurdly exorbitant rental for ploughland and meadows, and by so doing embitter yet more the relations between themselves and the peasants . . .

. . . Occasions are not rare when the village committees are controlled by elements of anarchic inclinations, who egg on the peasants to seize the nobleman's land, without waiting for the Constituent Assembly, to take the workers away from the estates, to take away from the noblemen their live

stock, machinery and tools, to cut their forests, and to forage in their fields. . . .

Why were these things occurring? It is the fashion to lay them to the baleful influence of agitators, either fanatics or German agents, who stirred up the peasants to sully the fair fame of the most gentlemanly Revolution in all history. Thus Mrs. Williams considers the growth of disregard for the *ptomieshtchik's* property rights not as something to be expected of people who had experienced what the Russian peasants had experienced, but as the product of Socialist agitators. She writes:

The masses seemed to feel that they were being driven to a dangerous course and did not give way at once. Even in the country, where, as in the towns, all the police were immediately arrested and sent to the front, where no new authorities were established to replace the old, the peasants at first assumed an expectant attitude. The expression, "We 'll just wait for the new Law," was a current phrase, which reflected the peasants' habitual wariness. And they actually did wait. They cast longing glances at the landowners' land, cattle and other goods, but abstained from plunder, awaiting the order from the Centre.

Then appeared agitators, sometimes Bolsheviki, but more often Social-Revolutionaries, with mandates from the Petrograd or local Soviet, and explained to the peasants that they had nothing to wait for, but must hasten to execute the will of the people and "expropriate the expropriators," that is, take everything from the landowners.

It was just as difficult for peasants to withstand such arguments as it had been for soldiers to maintain discipline after the Order No. 1. Gradually the Russian countryside was turned into a veritable hell. Landowners' houses,

corn-stacks, stables, cattlesheds—all were set ablaze. Their owners were turned out, sometimes murdered. Already, before the November Revolution, some districts had not a single landowner left.<sup>1</sup>

This does not seem to be a correct interpretation of what occurred. The Social Revolutionary party, which supported the Provisional Government and did not wish to see it set at naught, never urged the off-hand anarchic seizure of estates. Its policy was to restrain the peasants until a general settlement of the land question should be promulgated. It was, then, not the incitement of Social-Revolutionary agitators which stirred up the peasants to seizures, but the delay in dealing with the land, the cutting and sale of timber by land-owners, and the rumors of the sale of estates to foreigners, who in any case would have to be compensated if the land were to be taken for the peasants. In his letter of resignation on July 20th Prince Lvov reveals the alarm of the noblemen regarding what was going on. He complains that the Minister of Agriculture (Tchernov) “does not combat the tendencies to seize land, does not regulate the agrarian relations, but seemingly justifies the highhanded seizures of land which are taking place all over Russia, legalizes these seizures and, so far as the land problem is concerned, aims to confront the Constituent Assembly with an accomplished fact.”

As the summer passed and the Coalition Government, impotent for domestic reform by its solicitude for the war and by its endeavor to be loyal to op-

<sup>1</sup> *From Liberty to Brest Litovsk*, p. 195.



posed social classes, did nothing, the country fell into uproar. *Izvestia* observes on October 16th, in an article headed "A Wave of Riots":

Daily newspapers bring a long list of tales about riots. Riots are made in cities and villages. Stores and landowners' storehouses are being looted. They are burning, looting, and raping.

These ugly riots arise because of the dissatisfaction of the wide masses of the people with their condition: peace did not come as soon as we expected; bread did not get cheaper; there still is no clothing, footwear, agricultural implements. . . ."

A fortnight later, before the Council of the Republic, the Minister of Provisioning confesses that "anarchy is prevailing throughout the country." Of the eight thousand tons of grain shipped to Petrograd by water half was held up on the way and looted. He reads telegrams explaining why the grain is not coming through to the army and the cities. From Cherepovetz: "Loads of grain on the 56th and 103d versts above Rybinsk. The peasants who live along the shore are looting, soldiers cannot stop them, we request that measures be taken to save the freight." From the Olonetz Food Committee: "Armed peasants have looted 1,120,000 poods [22,400 tons] of flour. Soldiers refuse to take the flour from the peasants. Please take measures against anarchy." He reports the receipt of similar telegrams from Petrozavodsk and Bielozersk. He declares:

. . . Just as it is impossible to carry on a war when there is no discipline, so the provisioning problem cannot

be solved when civil war is spreading throughout the country. Grain is produced by one class and is needed by another. It will be furnished only when one class supports another. But we have no such support, and grain is refused not only to the cities but also to the army. Besides this, some delegates from the army, which were sent to the villages as agitators, started their agitation as follows: "Brother peasants, do not furnish any grain, then the war will end sooner."

The provisioning of the city population is in a still worse condition. Everywhere the peasants say: "We will not give any grain to the cities and to the workers." You see that anarchy and civil war are fatal to the provisioning work.

It is interesting to note that this minister of the Provisional Government recommends, as the proper means of overcoming the natural reluctance of the peasants to give up their grain without an equivalent, the measure which later the Bolshevik Government used and which is often presented as a diabolical contrivance of the Bolsheviks, viz., the requisitioning of grain by commissaries backed by detachments of soldiers.

Not only was law feeble as against the will of masses, but months before it vanished from the scene the Provisional Government was powerless against the local soviet of workers' and soldiers' delegates. Thus when in July the American Red Cross Mission was coming in *via* the Trans-Siberian Railroad, it was stopped and examined at Chita at the instance of the Chita soviet. Then there was a soviet at Krasnoyarsk which had already become Bolshevik and which, it was rumored, intended to halt the train;

so the train dashed through Krasnoyarsk in the early morning without stopping. All this despite the strongest credentials from the Kerensky Government.

In August Colonel Raymond Robins of the Red Cross was in southern Russia looking after the needs of war refugees. He found in Ekaterinoslav and Kharkov that the local soviet was the real master. When he wanted anything done he had to see the soviet officials. His pockets were full of the strongest authorizations from the Government at Petrograd, but here they were only "stage money." It was from the soviets, not from the regular authorities, that he got trains and farm wagons for carrying his supplies. And if they said he could not have them he did not get them.

The reader is not to suppose that the Provisional Government started with a clear field and full authority and that the soviets, growing jealous, gradually encroached upon its field and whittled away its authority. The truth is that the soviets sprang up as early as the Provisional Government and among the masses the latter *never* had any power as against the will of the soviets. For some months the realities of the situation did not appear nakedly, simply because the soviets were Menshevik in leadership and disposed, therefore, to coöperate with the Provisional Government and with the Allies. As the soviets lost confidence in the Allies because of their failure to restate their war aims in harmony with the ideals of Russian democracy and in the Provisional Government because of its neglect of domestic reforms, they would not longer coöperate

and thereupon it became evident who was really master in the Russian land. With their slogan "All Power to the Soviets!" Lenin and Trotsky were not so much urging the thing that ought to be as stating the thing that actually was.

## CHAPTER XIX

### CITY ELECTIONS

**I**N Russia the bestowal of universal suffrage finds innumerable "dark" minds as yet quite unfurnished with any ideas whatever upon public questions. Either they are not even aware of the existence of these questions, or else they have not been able to arrive at opinions about them. Called upon, now, to combine for representation in the municipal dumas (city councils) which are being elected all over Russia in the summer of 1917, these inexperienced citizens are apt to gather not into true political parties but into groups formed on the lines of common nationality, religion, or economic interest.

Hence, besides the candidates of genuine parties we come upon candidates appealing only to those of a certain nationality, e. g., Ukrainians, Esthonians, Letts, Armenians, and Jews. Such a group, however, will by no means march always under one banner. In some cities there will be a Ukrainian National Bloc, a Ukrainian Socialist Bloc, perhaps even a Ukrainian *Hromada* (mass). Tickets will be put up by the Jewish Democracy, the Jewish National Bloc, the Jewish Community, and the Zionists. If a Lett does not care to vote for the candidates named by the Lettish Social Democrats, perhaps his ballot will be claimed by an organization calling itself "Just Letts."

There are even cases in which Lutherans or Mussulmans as such seek representation in the city *duma*.

Queerest of all, however, are certain groupings by occupation or property interest. In Novgorod-Volinsk the Merchants and Manufacturers, the Committee for Aiding the Families of Reservists, and the *Torbush* (Culture) Society nominate their respective tickets for its *duma*. And then quite seriously the "Residents of Zhitomirskaya Street" name a man and later elect him. Sterlitamak is no larger than an ordinary American county-seat town, but let no one suppose its *duma* will be monochrome. Seven of its members represent the Mussulman Bureau of House-Owners and Apartment-tenants, two speak for the Mussulman House-Owners (Is it the houses that are different?), one for the Women's Democratic Union, and one for the Union of City Employees!

In Yalutorovsk there are three tickets: (1) House-owners, (2) House-owners (another organization), (3) a "Bloc" composed of (a) the Union of Commercial-Industrial Employees, (b) the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates, and (c) the Executive Committee of the Union of Teachers and *Tchinovniks*.

In Ekaterinburg a disciple of Mahomet who owns his home and leans toward socialism must surely be torn by conflicting emotions when he is confronted by the rival tickets of Mussulmans, House-owners, and Menshevik Social Democrats.

In Tsaritzuin, besides the genuine political parties, there participate in the electoral battle organ-



ized House-owners, Merchants, Priests, Mussulmans, Lutherans, and Jews.

Thanks to political inexperience, the citizens do not cohere into two or three great parties, but form a bewildering variety of groups. In Kharkov there are twelve tickets of nominees for the city duma, in Poltava fourteen, in Kiev eighteen. But incoherence will touch its apex when in November in Petrograd *twenty* parties and groups will offer lists of candidates for membership in the Constituent Assembly.

In a word, in the more than seven hundred city elections held between June and September there compete two principles of political grouping. One is the familiar grouping according to opinion on public questions. The other is grouping according to social or economic affiliation. The latter prevails far more than with us, not only because there has not yet been time for the cohering of citizens on the basis of common opinion, but also because the formation of soviets in all centers has familiarized the people with the idea of representation according to economic interest.

In these duma elections the drift away from the middle-of-the-road parties stands revealed. At the end of July *Ryech* points out that the elections show the cities "in the power of a socialistic wave." In Murom the Socialist Bloc (Social Revolutionists and Social Democrats) wins 70 per cent. of the seats, in Sarapul 60 per cent., in Gomel 65 per cent., in Ufa 70 per cent., in Rostov-on-Don 76 per cent., in Kharkov 63 per cent., in Saratov 86 per cent., in Riazan

("in which the food situation is unusually good")  
36 per cent.

By the middle of August a review of the elections which have taken place in 276 cities shows that in the provincial capitals the Socialist parties have gained 70 per cent. of the seats, while in the county seats and other cities they have but 37½ per cent.—a striking indication of the influence of factories and urban concentration upon the political views of the masses.

On September 8th a Cadet-leader, Shingarev, compares the composition of the new Petrograd дума with that of its predecessor elected in May:

The Social Revolutionists gained twenty-one seats, the Bolsheviks became incredibly stronger, they gained thirty-four seats. . . . The Toil group and the Populist Socialists, who combined, have lost fifteen seats and have been reduced to insignificant figures, as well as the Yedinstvo group. The Mensheviks almost disappeared, having received eight places instead of forty places previously held.

The Party of People's Freedom (Cadets) remained in almost the same place. . . . Instead of 23.5 per cent. of all the deputies it has in the new Duma 21 per cent.

There can be no mistaking what this portends. He says:

At present the political barometer . . . clearly moves toward "storm."

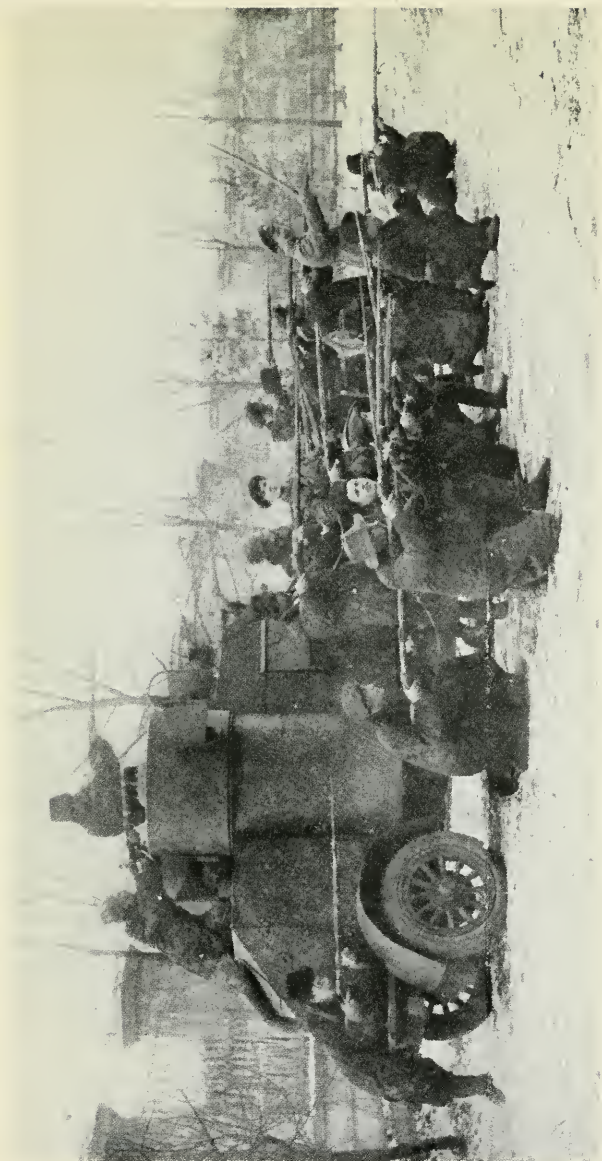
In the groups of revolutionary Socialism supported by the masses of the population of small intelligence are growing extremist forces and a spirit of new rebellion. In spite of the sad and disgraceful days of July 16th to 18th again these tendencies threaten.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE MOSCOW CONFERENCE

**G**ROWING fear of royalist plots and the German menace caused a feeling of uneasiness regarding the residence of Nicholas and his family at Tsarskoe Selo. Voices were raised in the Soviet demanding that the ex-tsar have meted out to him the punishment he was so ready to mete out to far better men, i. e., be sent to Siberia and put to work in the mines. Kerensky foresaw the possibility of having to use troops from the front against the Bolshevik workmen of Petrograd and he realized that with Nicholas near at hand his enemies might represent his moves as part of a royalist plot. Accordingly, it was decided to remove the Romanovs to Tobolsk in northwestern Siberia.

Fearing an attack upon the train which might result in the assassination of the imperial family, the Government was at great pains to keep the removal secret. Not even the head of the railroad department knew whither the train was bound. This time the gorgeous imperial train was not used. What was provided was an ordinary train of three sleeping-cars, a dining-car, and several third-class cars, with a second train for baggage and for thirty attendants. Nicholas was not informed whither he was going and was allowed little time for preparation. He inquired whether he was to be sent to the Crimea, where he had a palace and "could live like



A detachment of the Red Guard in a captured armored car



Vladimir Bonch-Brujevitsh



N. Krylenko  
Former military commander-in-chief of the Soviet Republic



a civilized man"; and on getting an evasive answer tears rose in his eyes. As the train pulled out the soldiers on the track jeered, one of them calling out "*Sibirsky Tsar!*", i. e., "Tsar of Siberia," and at the empress, who looked defiantly out of the window, "*Mrs. Rasputin.*"

Tobolsk is a dirty and unattractive town of twenty-five thousand inhabitants situated on the Irtish, in the midst of dreary marshes and forests, and two hundred miles from the railway. It is reached by steamer and, of course, save during the summer, it is cut off from the world. The imperial family was lodged in the "palace" of the former governors, a twenty-room, dilapidated, and very dirty stucco house without modern conveniences. There was poetic justice in the fact that for centuries Tobolsk has been the center to which the Romanovs exiled their foes and critics. A poet-revolutionist has called Tobolsk "a town of exiles' tears and blood from beaten backs, the real metropolis of all-crushing Tsarism." As no Romanov has ever been freer in resorting to exile to rid himself of the noble protesting hearts of Russia than Nicholas, there was a certain fitness in administering him a very dilute dose of his own medicine.<sup>1</sup>

The crumpling of the front and the Petrograd riots, together with the growing tendency of the peasants to deal with the lord's land as it seemed good to them, impressed the Provisional Government with the necessity of finding a basis for wide unified action if the Russian State was not to founder. Accordingly, it convened in Moscow, the ancient capital

<sup>1</sup> See Long, *Russian Revolutionary Aspects*, Chap. XIV.



and holy place of Russia, a National Conference made up of about two thousand five hundred representatives of all the parties, organizations and corporations which appeared to be vital and significant in Russian life. The announced apportionment of representation was as follows:

Representatives of the four Dumas .....	488
Peasants .....	100
Representatives of Soviets and public organizations .....	129
Cities (representatives of city govts.) .....	147
Zemstvo and City Unions .....	18
Zemstvos .....	118
Commercial and industrial circles and banks .....	150
Scientific organizations .....	99
Toiling intelligentsia .....	83
Army and fleet .....	117
Clericals and church organizations .....	24
Nationalist organizations .....	58
Provisioning committees .....	90
Agricultural societies .....	51
Coöperatives .....	313
Trade unions .....	176
Government commissaries .....	33
War Department .....	16
Class organizations .....	4
Members and representatives of the Government .....	15

It is not too much to say that between August 25th and August 28th the spokesmen of every successful element in Russia were gathered in the enormous hall of the Great Theater. Decorated officers and shock-headed peasants in smocks, Central Asian Mussulmans in *Khalati* and priests in cassocks, Tatars in tunics, and Georgians in *tcherkeska*, epauletted generals and privates in plain uniforms, frock-coated gentlemen and men in blouses, savants and hand-workers, bureaucrats and veteran revolutionists,—all were there to consider their country's dire need. Never before in Russia's history had a body

so representative of her superior people been convened.

The aims of the conference were two,—to give an expression at this crisis in the life of the State to all the important elements in Russian society, and to see if there could be found a concrete political program on which all interests might unite. The first aim was, indeed, achieved and the speeches of Kerensky, Teheidze, Tseretelli, Miliukov, Bublikov, General Kornilov, General Kaledin, Plekhanov, Kropotkin, Breshko-Breshkovskaya and others constitute an invaluable revelation of what lay at the heart of the self-conscious part of Russian society at this tragic moment. The second aim failed, for the unity of all the progressive forces was not achieved and the disintegration of Russia was not arrested.

Kerensky opened the conference with a frank disclosure of the appalling state of affairs.

Starving cities, the more-and-more disorganized transportation system,—this artery that carries food to the army and the navy and all the citizens of the Russian State,—the falling off in the output of industrial labor, the open refusal to support the country by great sacrifices of wealth and property on the part of the property-owning classes,—all this has brought us to the state where the decrease in the joint output due to the theft and waste of the national wealth, the weapons of defense and production, is accompanied by exhaustion of the Government treasury and a great financial and currency crisis. The same situation, and in fact, worse, may be observed in the political tendencies where the process of disorganization and the falling apart into new parties and groups, unfriendly to one an-

other, works great havoc, which is strengthened by the separatist aspirations on the part of several nationalities of Russia seeking salvation, not in a closer unity with the vital forces of the Russian State, but in more clearly and definitely marking off their fate from ours. . . .

Nekrassov, Minister of Finance, pointed out that the deficit for the year would be 15 billion rubles. Paper rubles, issued at the rate of 217 millions a month in 1915, 223 millions a month in 1916, 423 millions a month during January and February, 1917, had been issued since the Revolution at the rate of 832 millions a month! The food committees would cost 500 million rubles yearly, the land committees 140 million rubles. Most of the wage-increases in the munition-factories finally came out of the Treasury.

The lack of grip in the new régime is reflected in the falling receipts from taxes. As compared with 1916 the decrease in land revenue for the first three months after the Revolution amounts to 32 per cent.; in the city real-estate tax, 41 per cent.; in the taxes on rent, 43 per cent.; war revenue yielded 29 per cent. less; industrial enterprises 19 per cent. less; the tax on mortgages, 11 per cent. less; the inheritance tax, 16 per cent. less; the insurance tax, 27 per cent. less; the redemption duties, 65 per cent. less. After having suffered from iron tsarism, the only government the Russian people will tolerate is one so *soft* that it cannot even collect its taxes!

The most sensational episode was the appearance of the Commander-in-Chief, General Kornilov. Already the bourgeoisie were rallying about Kornilov as the man of iron and blood who would sweep aside

the rhetorician Kerensky. The morning of his arrival in Moscow, on the second day of the conference, illustrated pamphlets were circulated describing his remarkable rise, his heroism and his victories, and holding him up as his country's destined savior. He was met at the railroad station by Cossacks, military cadets, members of the volunteer "shock" (*udarnye*) battalions, representatives of the "Moscow Industrial Group" (manufacturers and merchants), the Mayor of Moscow, and the veteran Duma member Rodichev. As the general, accompanied by his body-guard of tall Tekke Turkomans in their huge black sheepskin caps, marched down the line, flowers were strewn at his feet. As the mayor welcomed him as Russia's hero, savior, and "our heart's desire," some of the Cossacks shed tears.

When he entered the theater the members generally rose, but about forty private soldiers, delegates from the front, ostentatiously kept their seats and replied with hisses to the cry, "Get up, scoundrels!"

In his speech Kornilov does not openly assail the Kerensky-Soviet régime but indirectly he indicts it. He declares that the shooting of mutineers at the front has brought a healthier spirit into the army but the destructive, disintegrating propaganda still continues.

For some time since the beginning of August the soldiers, who have turned into beasts that have lost all semblance of warriors have been killing their commanders. He gives a list of such victims, winding up with the bayonetting of General Pourgasov of the Doubno Regiment by his own soldiers.

But when the regiment that refused to surrender the

instigators and criminals was surrounded by a specially chosen division and the commissary, threatening to annihilate the entire regiment by fire and sword, demanded that these criminals be surrendered, there was crying and imploring for mercy. The criminals were surrendered, they were court-martialled and are now awaiting the penalty which they will not escape.<sup>1</sup>

As an inheritance from the old régime free Russia received an army, in the organization of which there were considerable shortcomings but, none the less, this army was firm, pugnacious, and ready for sacrifices. By a number of legislative measures passed after the Revolution by people who did not understand its spirit, the army has been transformed into a wild mob, valuing nothing but its life. There have been instances when individual regiments expressed a desire to conclude peace with the Germans, and were ready to return to the enemy the captured territory and to pay indemnities to the extent of 200 rubles for each soldier.

General Kornilov urged that discipline be established by giving proper authority to the officers to regulate the necessary inside work, force the soldiers to feed and clean the horses and to clean their own lodgings—now very filthy. The prestige of the officers must be restored and they should be morally indemnified for the humiliation and systematic jeering they have had to undergo, as well as better paid. The activities of committees should be confined to the economic and interior life of the army and not interfere with plans of military operations, with fighting, or with the selection of officers.

From the slump in the production of munitions the

<sup>1</sup> But they did escape it.

general draws the inference "there must be no difference between the front and the rear with regard to the strictness of régime necessary for the salvation of the country." From his recommendations presented to the Government but three days before we know that what he means is the extending of martial law over railroads and factories working for the Army.

Even more striking is the speech of General Kaledin, Hetman of the Cossacks. With indignation he repudiates the charge that the Cossacks are counter-revolutionary:

Understanding revolutionary spirit not in the sense of fraternizing with the enemy troops, not in the sense of deserting our posts of duty, not in the sense of criminally robbing the national Treasury, not in the sense of destroying completely the personal inviolability of our citizens and their property, or in rude violation of the freedom of speech, press and assemblage, the Cossacks repudiate all imputations of counter-revolutionary spirit.

In the name of the men from the twelve Cossack regions of Russia the Hetman suggests the following measures:

(1) The army must be kept out of politics. No more political meetings.

(2) All soviets and committees must be abolished, in the army as well as in the interior of the country, save the committees of regiments and smaller units, the rights and duties of which shall be strictly limited to the economic sphere.

(3) The Declaration of the Soldier's Rights must be revised and supplemented by a declaration of his duties.

(4) Discipline in the army must be restored by the most drastic measures.



(5) For the sake of the fighting capacity of the army the front and the rear must be recognized as one entity and all measures required for strengthening discipline at the front must also be applied to the rear.

(6) The disciplinary rights of the officers must be restored to them.

(7) The leaders of the army must regain their full authority.

(8) At this terrible hour of great reverses at the front and complete disorganization in the interior the country can be saved only by confiding full power to the hands of experienced and capable men, not bound by party or group programs, free from the necessity of taking no step without first obtaining the approval of various committees and soviets, who realize that the will of the nation as a whole is the source of sovereign power in the state and not the will of separate parties or groups.

(9) In both the center and the provinces there should be undivided governmental authority. The usurpation of power by central and local committees and soviets should be immediately and abruptly stopped.

(10) Russia must remain one. All separatist aspirations must be nipped in the bud.

(11) In the economic realm there must be the strictest economy. The conscription of labor must be adopted forthwith. Wages and profits must immediately be regulated in accordance with the requirements of agriculture and manufacturing. It is necessary to take the most severe measures to stop the undermining of these industries, now suffering from the arbitrary actions of all kinds of committees, which subvert the established system of exploiting the soil and disturb the relations between proprietors and lease-holders.

The Commissary Filonenko, who wrote most of Kornilov's speech, was careful to make national de-

fense its refrain. But it takes no acumen to perceive that the emphasis of Kaledin's speech is on the protection of the rights of the propertied class. In the name of military efficiency he coolly proposes to suppress political meetings among the soldiers, who are two-fifths of the male citizens of Russia, conscript labor, limit wages, wipe out the land committees and destroy the soviets,—in a word to wrest from the toiling eleven-twelfths of the Russian people nearly all their gains from the Revolution. Quite plainly at Moscow we see discontented Property aiming a blow at that rapidly growing organization of the working masses which threatens to abolish its time-hallowed domination of Russian society.

The auditorium is clearly divided between the opposing groups in the conference. On the right sit Duma members, leaders of the "Industrial Group," army officers and the representatives of the *Intelligentsia*. On the left sit delegates of the soviets and representatives of the army committees, who have come from the front as a counterpoise to the Kornilovite officers. The conference develops into a series of competitive demonstrations between the Socialists<sup>1</sup> and the soldiers on the one hand and the

<sup>1</sup> The Bolsheviks were not represented in the Moscow Conference, as they considered it "packed" against the working class. The following from *Izvestia* of August 26th throws light on their feelings:

"The Moscow Government Conference is opening under abnormal conditions: tram-cars are not running, cafés and restaurants are closed. At yesterday's meeting of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates it was resolved to call upon the Moscow proletariat not to call a strike, however the mood of the Moscow proletariat in regard to the Moscow Conference proved to be so hostile, that late at night there took place a meeting of the Bureau of the Central Professional Union (trade unions), at which were present representa-

non-Socialists and the officers on the other hand.

Naturally, therefore, Kaledin's speech is punctuated with demonstrations and followed by a commotion. The Right and a part of the Center applaud, while from the Left come shouts of indignation and protest. He is followed by Tcheidze, head of the All-Russian Soviet, who begins by calling over the formidable roll of people's organizations he represents and which the Cossack Hetman proposes off-hand to dissolve:

In the name of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates, in the name of the Executive Committee of Peasants' Delegates, of the Executive Committee of the United Social-Welfare Organizations, of the coöperative organizations, of the chairmen of the Provisioning Committees, in the name of the representatives of the organizations at the front and the army, and the soldiers' section of the Central Executive Committee of Soviets of Soldiers' and Workers' Delegates, in the name of the All-Russian Union of Crippled Warriors, of the All-Russian Union of Zemstvos and Munitives of all the district branches. This conference which represented four hundred thousand of the Moscow proletariat almost unanimously resolved to call a strike. Only the Union of Employees of Commercial Industrial Enterprises (store clerks) and the Union of Printers did not join in the resolution to call a strike. The newspapers in Moscow will be published to-morrow.

"Beginning with the morning near the Grand Theater where the State Conference is meeting, there are huge crowds of people, over ten thousand persons. The entire district of the Grand Theater is surrounded by a triple cordon of cadets and soldiers. Order is maintained in the crowd by mounted militia and militia on foot. There is no disorder. There were no demonstrations, because all organizations including the Bolsheviks urged the workers not to make any demonstrations.

"The crowd received the arriving delegates very coldly, only an insignificant part of the crowd expressed approval, in the main the crowd was in a hostile mood, and there were even heard hisses."

cialities, of the Central Union of the employees of governmental and private institutions, of the All-Russian Railway Constituent Convention and the majority of the representatives of municipal self-government I have the honor to state:

His platform proposes:

(1) Offset the fixing of prices on agricultural products by likewise fixing the prices of the manufactures the peasant has to buy. This involves, likewise, the regulation of wages.

(2) State control of industries and even the creating of state syndicates (regulated combinations) of industrial enterprises. State protection of labor, regulation of the relations between labor and capital. Work-or-fight laws.

(3) Luxury taxes, a tax on the increment in the value of productive securities and a levy on capital.

(4) The peasants' committees, their sphere of competency precisely defined by law, to be charged with the regulation of the local land problem.

(5) The sphere of activity of the officers, commissaries, and army organizations to be defined. The officers should be entirely independent as regards technical and strategic direction of the troops and in all questions affecting the training of the troops the decision shall rest with them. The commissaries should speak for the Government in all questions which stand in relation to the general revolutionary policy of the Provisional Government. They should work in close contact with the army organizations. The rights of the army committees should receive legislative recognition.

(6) The local soviet to have no authority once a local administration has been created.

(7) Recognition of the right of full self-determination for all nationalities in Russia. Equal rights of non-Russian nationalities in the use of their own languages.

The reader will not fail to note the socialistic tinge of these proposals, which have the support of all the political and occupational groups represented in the Conference.

Tseretelli declares that the policies the generals propose would mean the funeral of free Russia. "We speak of sacrifices; the Democracy does everything for the salvation of the country. . . . If all the democratic organizations created by the activities of the people themselves were suppressed, who then would stand up in defense of freedom and the very existence of the country?"

The declaration on behalf of the members of the Fourth Duma read by Rodzianko formulates the desires of bourgeois Russia. It puts the war first and insists that "the Government, in defining the aims of the war waged by Russia and the Allies, must not introduce any tendencies of international Socialism, but must be guided exclusively by the national interests of Russia . . . The Government must keep itself completely independent of the Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers' and Peasants' Delegates, which do not represent the will of the entire nation."

It is instructive to compare with Kaledin's proposals those of the great revolutionary thinkers and heroes, Breshko-Breshkovskaya, Kropotkin and Plekhanov, who are just as much for fighting through the war with entire loyalty to the Allies as Rodzianko and Kaledin, but who will not stand for repression. The first rebukes the bourgeoisie, who do nothing for the working-people in return for being fed by it.

“Where are you?” she exclaims. “Where is your knowledge, your devotion? Where is your work for your country’s salvation? So far no one has felt it: You realize that the people need enlightenment: why, therefore, do you withhold it? Who is working to that end? Who is agitating among the unenlightened population? I do not see, I do not hear anything of the sort. The people remain friendless, without teachers, without leaders, even as they were before.”

Kropotkin warns: “Repressive measures will get us nowhere. Something else is needed. It is necessary that the great mass of the Russian people should understand and see that a new era is approaching, an era that will give the whole people the opportunity to obtain education, to live no longer in that terrible, horrifying poverty and squalor in which the Russian people have lived up till now. . . .”

This get-together conference fails because the society of abysmal contrasts produced under the old régime has within five months become polarized into two hostile camps. *Ryech* says in its issue of August 31st:

. . . A comparison of the contents of the resolutions of both camps shows that, while they agree in many particulars, both camps continue to differ in principle in their views regarding the most fundamental clauses of the Government’s program, such as: rehabilitation of the army and increase of its fighting ability, reestablishment of authority of the Government throughout the country, preservation of the unity of Russia from the claims of the nationalities inhabiting it, that the will of the Constituent Assembly in the agrarian problem should not be prejudged, etc. With such



a state of affairs it is evident that, no matter what were the *demonstrations* of the getting together of the two opposite camps, it is still very far from a real unity.

Nine days later it observes:

It is now clear to all that the Conference did not improve but aggravated the condition of authority, by exposing to the whole country the contradictions hidden in it and clearly demonstrating those irreconcilable differences, which had kept the Government in a state of constant hesitation and indecision.

While the conference reveals in dramatic fashion the developing antagonism between bourgeoisie and Socialists, it gives no hint of the intrigues aiming to unite these groups against the Bolsheviks. Kerensky and Kornilov, although disliking and despising each other, realize that neither can hold power without the aid of the other. Negotiations are in progress intended to bring together the army, the bourgeoisie, and the moderates to crush the extremists.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE KORNILOV AFFAIR

**L**AVR Kornilov, whom Lenin in April, 1918, called "the most daring of the counter-revolutionaries," was born in Mongolia, the son of a Transbaikal Cossack and a Mongol mother. At the age of thirteen he was herding cows in a Siberian village. Securing admission to the Michailovsky Artillery School in Petrograd, he soon amazed his teachers by his gift for languages and mathematics. After receiving his officer's commission he went to Turkestan, where he set himself to explore and study and make himself master of the local dialects. He did this so well that presently he could pass for a Turkoman, all the more because his Mongol blood showed itself in a light yellowish skin, a sparse black beard, high cheek-bones and oblique brown eyes. The local Mohammedans worshipped him; and from this epoch dates his habit of surrounding himself with Moslem tribesmen.

In the Russo-Japanese War he was charged with fighting the rear-guard action that saved one of Kuropatkin's three armies after the Battle of Mukden. For this he was rewarded with the Cross of St. George and with a golden sword presented personally by the tsar.

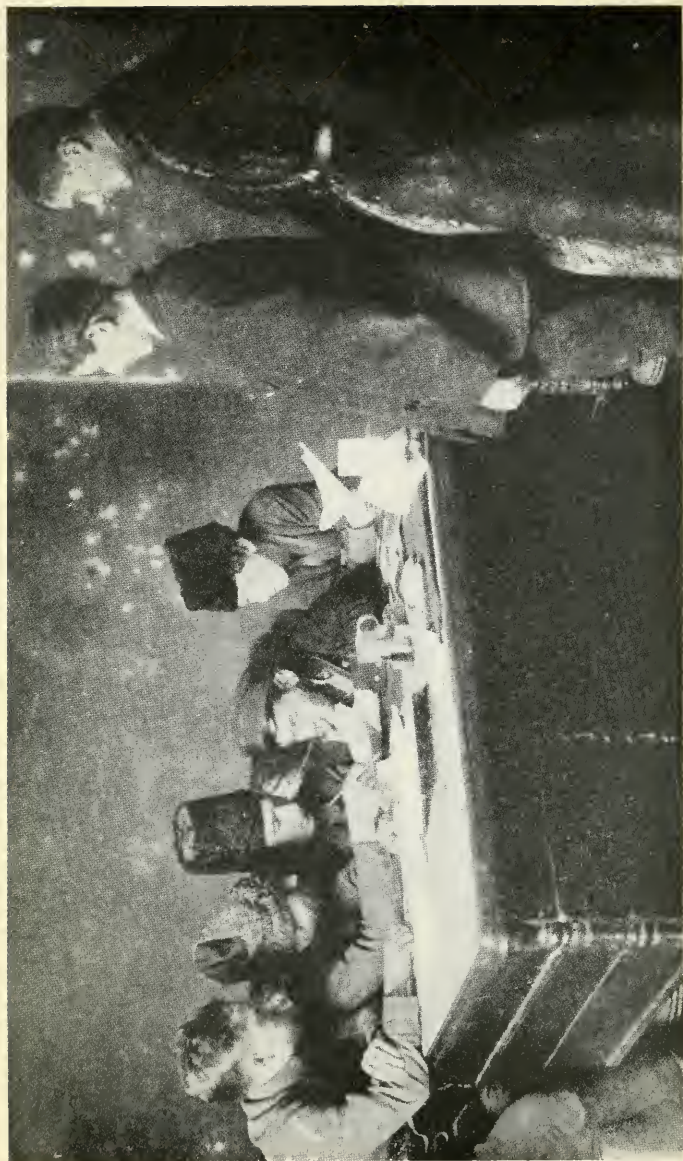
Sent to Peking as military agent after the Japanese War, he made remarkable progress in mastering Chinese. In the World War Kornilov commanded

a division. In the terrible Galician retreat his division had to protect the withdrawal of the rest of the army. Although wounded in the arm, he led the charges of his men as he had done at Mukden. He was taken prisoner and spent a year in an Austrian prison camp in Bohemia. Feigning illness in order to get a hospital allowance of food and thus keep up his strength, he managed to escape with the aid of a Czech soldier, Mrnak by name, and the two walked five hundred miles, living for the most part upon berries. Surprised by Austrians, Mrnak, protecting his comrade, was taken prisoner while the general escaped. Mrnak was executed as a traitor, but the grateful Russian, although a poor man, arranged for the payment of a life pension to the soldier's family, entered Mrnak's name upon the roll of a Russian regiment, and ordered that at every roll-call, when Mrnak's name was pronounced, the sergeant should reply, "Shot by Hungarian court-martial in Pressburg for saving the life of General Kornilov."

On returning to Petrograd he obtained an audience with the tsaritzza. After recounting his adventurous escape he described with emotion the sufferings and hardships of the Russian prisoners in Austria and begged the tsaritzza to exert her influence with the neutral nations to get better treatment for her unfortunate subjects. After listening impatiently for a short time she coldly dismissed him. The general was furious. Months later it fell to the lot of General Kornilov, as commandant in Petrograd after the Revolution, to communicate to the tsaritzza the abdication of the tsar and the deci-



General Kornilov and his staff



Enlistment of volunteers for the Red Army



sion of the Provisional Government as to the future of the imperial family. With a proud and cold air the tsaritzza received him standing and he began reading the proclamation. When he was half-way through it she haughtily motioned him to cease, as she could bear no more of it. The general hesitated, but then the memory of her indifference to the sufferings of his poor lads in Austrian prison camps swept over him and he obliged her to hear the proclamation to the last word.

Made commander-in-chief of the southwestern front, Kornilov, after the ignominious collapse of the Russian resistance in Galicia, re-introduced the death penalty on his own responsibility. The order to his commanders and commissaries runs:

I consider the voluntary retirement of troops from their positions as equivalent to treason and treachery. Therefore I require that all commanders in such cases shall relentlessly turn the fire of machine-guns and artillery against the traitors. I take on myself full responsibility for the victims. Inaction and hesitation on the part of commanders I shall count as neglect of duty and such officers I shall at once deprive of their command and commit for trial.

Kornilov notified the Provisional Government of his action. Promptly the Government sanctioned what he had done and issued an order restoring the death penalty on the front during the war. The crimes punished by death were enumerated and the make-up of the military courts to try offenders was prescribed. At the end of July Kornilov took the place of Brusilov as Supreme Commander-in-Chief.

So desperate was the emergency that Kornilov ordered wholesale execution of mutineers. More



than once whole battalions of soldiers were mown down by machine-guns, and the stiffened bodies were stood up in rows along the fences with placards on their breasts announcing:

“I was shot because I was a traitor to Russia.”

For a while the method seemed to succeed, and the propertied and pro-war elements began to turn toward the “little Cossack general” as the “strong man” who could restore military discipline and the supremacy of law. Not only reactionaries but the bourgeois liberals as well were for him, and even some of the toiling elements. By birth and upbringing he was a man of the people and no one believes he desired to bring back the tsar.

Kornilov pressed for limitation of the sphere of army committees and commissaries, the restoration of the disciplinary powers of officers, death penalty for the rear, and military control over railroads and the factories working for the army. Kerensky long stood out against granting him so much and from the latter part of August the tension between the two men rapidly grew.

At the Moscow Conference Kornilov exclaimed: “Surely it is not necessary that Riga should fall in order that the need for discipline in the army should become apparent to all!” On September 2d the German troops crossed the Dwina southeast of Riga, and on the next day Riga was given up. The official *communiqué* states that the regiments left their positions of their own accord, that “the disorganized masses are retreating in an irresistible torrent and are filling up all the roads.” Later it was established that the troops fought bravely, suffered heavy

losses, and generally left their positions because they were ordered to retire. From this it came to be widely believed that Kornilov caused Riga to be surrendered. Three months later the Soviet Government published a cipher telegram, found in the secret archives of the Foreign Office, from the Italian Ambassador at Jassy to Baron Sonnino at Rome, dated September 4th and purporting to transmit a conversation at Russian Headquarters between General Kornilov and the Rumanian Minister Diamandi, in which the general said that great importance should not be attached to the fall of Riga; the troops retreated at his orders and he ordered their retreat because he preferred the loss of territory to the loss of an army; he also calculated on the impression which will be made by the taking of Riga on public opinion, for the purpose of the immediate restoration of discipline in the Russian Army.<sup>1</sup>

Meantime Petrograd became apprehensive and a considerable exodus began. An interesting side light on the quality of patriotism in Russian business circles is the fact that, toward the end of this month, when the chairman of the Financial Section of the Commission for the Evacuation of Petrograd sounded the insurance companies as to the insurance of property left behind by citizens quitting the capital, the directors after consultation announced that for the period *before* the occupation of Petrograd by the Germans they would insure at the rate of sixty rubles per thousand, but that for the period *after* their rate would be *a third less!*

That the general was bidding for the support of the

<sup>1</sup> *Izvestia*, December 14th.

landed proprietors may be seen clearly from an order he issued on September 4th. On the ground that it is the duty of the supreme commander-in-chief to concern himself with the supply of provisions and fodder, he forbade within the war zone: (1) Interference with the gathering of crops by agricultural machines; (2) the unlawful removal of live stock and other farm property; (3) the taking away from the estates of war prisoners or other workers; (4) compelling the proprietors to pay the war prisoners more than the rate established by Government organs; (5) inciting the workers to demand more than the wage previously agreed on; (6) requiring the landowners to pay for harvest labor in grain rather than in money; (7) the forcible seizure of standing or gathered crops; (9) interference with the preparation of the fields for winter crops and the sowing of these crops. Finally, the landowners are to strain every effort to gather their crops and work their fields. The sanction of this order is imprisonment up to three years and the provincial and county commissaries who neglect to enforce it will be punished. This means, of course, that the estate-owners are to be protected in all their property rights and to get their labor on the old terms.

Early in September Kerensky, under strong pressure from the military chiefs, decided to give Kornilov the laws he wanted and sent Savinkov, his Assistant Minister of War, a famous revolutionary terrorist, to headquarters "to ask from General Kornilov a cavalry corps for the effectual realization of a state of war in Petrograd, and for the defense of

the Provisional Government against any kind of attempts upon it, and in particular against attempts by the Bolsheviks, action by whom had already taken place during the three days July 16th to 18th, and, according to the information of the agents of the counter-espionage abroad, was being prepared anew in connection with a German landing and a rising in Finland."

Savinkov explained to Kornilov that it was doubtful how the Soviet would react to the new laws and requested the despatch to Petrograd of the 3d Cavalry Corps which, however, should not include the "Savage" Division and not be under General Krymov. He urged that if it was necessary to use arms for the suppression of disorders, the action taken must be of a most decisive and ruthless character. Kornilov replied that he did not understand any other kind of action in such cases and that the troops would be instructed accordingly.

Savinkov returned and on September 9th received from Kornilov this telegram:

"Corps will be concentrated in the environs of Petrograd by evening of September 10. Beg you to declare Petrograd in state of war on September 11."

Now occurs the intervention of the man destined to bring misunderstanding between the two leaders who otherwise might have coöperated to tide Russia over the crisis. Vladimir Lvov, Procurator of the Holy Synod in the First Provisional Government, became impressed with the need of something like dictatorship and on September 4th he talked over the matter with Kerensky. He then presented him-

self at Mohilev, the general headquarters, claiming to be an emissary of Kerensky, and sounded the commander-in-chief on the subject of creating a stronger Government. He stated that Kerensky was ready to leave the Cabinet if in Kornilov's judgment his presence in it impaired its authority. Lvov returned to Petrograd and informed the Premier that Kornilov proposed: (1) The declaration of martial law in Petrograd; (2) the giving of all military and civil power into the hands of the supreme commander-in-chief; (3) the resignation of all ministers, including the Premier himself, and the transfer temporarily of control from the ministers to their assistants until the formation of the commander-in-chief's cabinet.

The Premier promptly communicated by direct wire with headquarters and obtained from Kornilov confirmation of his proposition. Regarding it as an ultimatum, Kerensky, after conferring with some of his colleagues, wired Kornilov on September 9th, ordering him to turn over the command to General Lukomsky. Kornilov refused to surrender his command,<sup>1</sup> while Lukowsky telegraphed refusing to take

<sup>1</sup> On the night of September 9th Kornilov issued his appeal to the troops. The Mohilev compositors, being loyal, refused to set it up. Accordingly, one of his officers with a squad of ten Tekke Turkomans went to a printing-shop and with their long curved sabers drawn they menaced the compositors with death unless they set up the appeal. The Mohilev Soviet, learning of what was going on, decided to neutralize Kornilov's appeal by sending out with it Kerensky's proclamation denouncing the revolt. So, under the nose of these same ferocious Turkomans, who, of course, knew not a word of Russian, the compositors set up and printed Kerensky's manifesto and the two proclamations, bane and antidote, were loaded on the same cars and distributed to the army at the same time! (See *Izvestia* of September 14th.)

it. The Provisional Government then issued the following proclamation:

### A MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE

I hereby announce:

On September 8th General Kornilov sent to me the member of the State Duma V. N. Lvov with a demand for the surrender by the Provisional Government of the whole plenitude of civil and military authority, with a view to his forming, at his personal discretion, a NEW GOVERNMENT for administering the country. The authenticity of Deputy Lvov's authorization to make such a proposal to me was subsequently confirmed by General Kornilov in his conversation with me by direct wire. Perceiving in the presentation of such demands, addressed to the Provisional Government in my person, a desire of some circles of Russian society to take advantage of the grave condition of the State for the purpose of establishing in the country a state of authority in contradiction to the conquests of the Revolution, the Provisional Government has found it indispensable:

To authorize me, for the salvation of OUR COUNTRY, of liberty, and of Republican order, to take prompt and resolute measures for the purpose of uprooting any attempt to encroach upon the supreme authority in the State and upon the rights which the citizens have conquered by the Revolution.

I am taking all necessary measures to protect the liberty and order of the country, and the population will be informed in due course with regard to such measures.

At the same time I order herewith:

(I) General Kornilov to surrender the post of Supreme Commander-in-Chief to General Klembovsky, the Commander-in-Chief over the armies of the Northern front which bar the way to Petrograd; and General Klembovsky



to enter temporarily upon the post of Supreme Commander-in-Chief, while remaining at Pskov.

(II) To declare the city and district of Petrograd under martial law, extending to it the regulations for the localities declared under martial law.

I call upon all the citizens to preserve complete tranquillity and to maintain order, which is so indispensable for the salvation of the country. I call upon all the ranks of the army and navy to carry on with calmness and self-abnegation their duty of defending the country against the external enemy.

A. F. KERENSKY,

Prime-Minister, Minister of War and Marine.

The 9th day of September, 1917.

Kornilov replied with the declaration:

#### PROCLAMATION BY THE SUPREME COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

The Premier's telegram No. 4163 is in its first portion a lie throughout: it was not I who sent Deputy Vladimir Lvov to the Provisional Government, but he came to me as the Premier's envoy. Deputy Alexis Aladin is a witness to this.

A great provocation has thus taken place, which jeopardizes the fate of the FATHERLAND.

People of Russia!

Our great country is dying. The hour of its end is near. Being compelled to come forward in the open, I, General Kornilov, declare that, under the pressure of the Bolshevik majority of the soviets, the Provisional Government is acting in complete accord with the plans of the German General Staff, at the time when enemy troops are landing on the Riga coast; it is killing the army and shaking the foundations of the country.

A grave sense of the inevitable ruin of the country com-

mands me at this threatening moment to call upon all Russian people to save the dying country.

All you in whose breast a Russian heart is beating; all you who believe in God and in the temples, pray to the Lord to manifest the greatest miracle of saving our native land. I, General Kornilov, the son of a Cossack peasant, declare to all and sundry that I want nothing for my own person, except the preservation of a Great Russia, and I swear to carry over the people, by means of a victory over the enemy, to the Constituent Assembly at which it will decide its own fate and choose the order of its new State life.

I cannot bring it upon myself to hand over Russia to its hereditary enemy, the German race, and to turn the Russian people into slaves of the Germans, but prefer to die on the field of honor and battle, so as not to see the shame and infamy of the Russian Land.

Russian people, the life of your country is in your hands!

GENERAL KORNILOV.

The 9th day of September, 1917.

For a while it was possible to take the view that Kornilov did not originally aim to overthrow the Provisional Government, that he only desired to see formed within the Government a special War Cabinet, which should include Kerensky as well as himself, and that he and Kerensky came into a fateful misunderstanding owing to the blunders of Lvov. There are, indeed, points of doubt still to be cleared up, but the publication on December 12th of General Alexiev's letter to Miliukov of September 12th establishes the existence of a wide plot. Alexiev writes:

“The Kornilov affair was not the act of a handful of adventurers; it was supported by the sympathy

and assistance of large circles among our intellectuals. . . . You are aware to some extent that certain circles of our public not only knew about everything, and not only sympathized with the idea, but helped Kornilov as far as they could." He warns that, unless a campaign in favor of the imprisoned officers is not immediately started in the columns of the "honest press," "General Kornilov will be compelled to unfold in detail before the court all the preparations, all the negotiations with persons and bodies, as well as their participation, in order to show the Russian people with whom he was acting, what were the real aims he was pursuing, and how at the critical moment, abandoned by all, he appeared with a small number of officers before a hurried tribunal."

Be that as it may, the conflict was on. The Provisional Government sent out appeals to all its commissaries in the army, to the Petrograd garrison, and to the Cossack troops. The Central Executive Committees of the All-Russian Soviets, of the Peasants as well as of the Workers and Soldiers, joined in an appeal to the army:

*To the Entire Army:*

Comrades, officers, and soldiers! General Kornilov has mutinied against the Revolution and the Provisional Government. He wants to restore the old régime and to deprive the people of land and liberty. For his criminal ends he is ready to open the front to the Germans and betray the country.

Comrades, soldiers, and officers! The Revolution and the country call upon you to perform your duty. Stand up, all of you, as one man, for the defense of your land and

liberty. Not one of General Kornilov's orders must be carried out. Obey only the orders of the Provisional Government and of the Central Committee of the Councils of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Delegates. Rally around them! Now that the foreign foe is threatening Petrograd, the army must remain united and strong. Now every officer and every soldier is especially needed by the country which they must defend against the foreign foe.

A negligible handful of traitors are taking part in the mutiny against the Revolution. There must be no lynching of officers or soldiers. The Provisional Government and the Executive Committees are taking all measures towards discovering all the participants in the plot, who will be made to suffer the punishment they deserve.

Comrades, soldiers, and officers, act in unison. In this way, you will save the Republic and the democratic organization of the army. In this way, you will save yourselves and you will avert unnecessary sacrifices.

For the sake of all this, the Executive Committees of the Councils of Workmen's, Soldiers' and Peasants' Delegates call upon all officers and soldiers to rally to the defense of the country, the Revolution and the Provisional Government against the traitors who have arisen against the Revolution and against the people.

Then soldiers, sailors, and workingmen, agitated by the cry "counter-revolution," rallied to the side of the Government. The Bolshevik leaders imprisoned in the Peter and Paul Fortress declared for Kerensky. The army at the front would not go with Kornilov. From garrisons in the rear towns,<sup>1</sup> from the fleet at Helsingfors, Reval, and Kronstadt came

<sup>1</sup> The soldiers at Viborg discovered that their commanders were suppressing telegrams from the Provisional Government ordering them to send troops to Petrograd to defend it: they arrested their officers and when they found among their papers the correspondence which had passed between these officers and General Kornilov they lynched twenty-two of them.

sailors to fight for the Government. Into the Ministry of War poured telegrams from units of soldiers, sailors, and workingmen, urging the Government to stand firm. So, while Kornilov's advance guard was still thirty miles from the capital, the revolt broke down. Had Kornilov been able to hold together the strong force he started with, no doubt there would have been in Petrograd "a murder grim and great." It was not alone the Bolsheviki, still in the minority in the Petrograd Soviet and the Central Executive Committee, that he was striking at. He intended to dispose finally of the Soviets, that rising power which was making it impossible for the propertied to dominate society as of yore. His officers cheerfully announced they intended to "hang Kerensky." As for the committeemen of the Soviets, hundreds of them would have been massacred.<sup>1</sup>

One of the most picturesque incidents of the de-

<sup>1</sup> How far out were the calculations of the bourgeoisie appears from the fact that on September 10th Miliukov assured Kerensky that the real strength lay on the side of Kornilov, while on the same day Prince Troubetzkoy with Kornilov's approval was telegraphing the Minister of Foreign Affairs:

"On a sober estimate of the situation one has to admit that the whole personnel in command, the overwhelming majority of the officers and the best part of the army at the front will follow Kornilov. In the rear there will stand by his side the whole of Cossackdom, the majority of the military schools, as well as the best elements of the troops. To their physical power must be added the superiority of a military organization over the weakness of the Government organs, the moral sympathy of all non-Socialist elements of the population, the ever-growing discontent with the existing order among the lowest classes and among the majority of the popular and urban masses, who have become blunted in regard to everything, the indifference which obeys *the stroke of the whip*. An enormous number of those who were Socialists in March will doubtless pass over immediately to their side." Notice the reliance upon the ignorant and sodden "*lowest classes*"!

fense was the Soviet's sending to the primitive-minded Moslem horsemen a Mohammedan delegation which included Zahid-Shefich-Shamyl, grandson of the famous Circassian chief Shamyl, who resisted Russia so many years. This delegation went from regiment to regiment of the mountaineers and in long talks explained how they were being used and besought them not to be ensnared by the counter-revolutionists. A strong impression was made on the Tcherkesses, Chechentsi, and Georgians by pointing out that General Kornilov, who demanded the strictest obedience, was himself disobeying his superiors, the Provisional Government.

Alarmed by the effect the Soviet Mohammedans were having, the corps commander called in Prince Chavchavadzeh and ordered him to arrest the delegates at once. Despite his repeated and insistent orders, the prince and the other mountaineers refused on the ground that the delegates were under the protection of the sacred laws of hospitality.<sup>1</sup>

The Tartars, who constituted a third of the division, told the American Associated Press correspondent <sup>1</sup> that the officers

had harangued the men, promising all sorts of political advantages if they overthrew Kerensky, and at the same time assuring them that they would not have to do much fighting. Appeals were made to their religion; and the atheism of the Petrograd Socialists was cited as proof that the Provisional Government was unfriendly to Islam. As

<sup>1</sup> One would give something to have been present at these talks. Marxian social philosophy refracted in a Mohammedan mind and presented in terms to appeal to a Circassian highlander with the mental background of Roderick Dhu!

<sup>1</sup> Long, *Russian Revolution Aspects*, p. 224.



I was leaving, a horseman beckoned me aside and whispered: "You have heard from these men ten reasons why we embarked on our march against the Government. Now let me give you the eleventh reason. Last Thursday our officers reminded us how we had suffered when in Kolomea in Galicia owing to the absence of a mosque. They reminded us that Petrograd, whither we were bound, about five years ago started to build a magnificent mosque to the glory of Allah. This mosque, they declared, was unfinished as result of strikes by the Socialists. The officers swore by the Koran and on the hilts of their sabers that Kornilov, who is himself of Tartar blood, would reward the captors of Petrograd by forcing the irreligious Bolshevik workmen, under threat of being shot, to complete the mosque within a month."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The "Savage" Division was by no means counter-revolutionary in spirit. The following statement appeared in *Izvestia* of September 15: *To All Citizens of Russia*:

In view of the fantastic rumors and false charges which have appeared in some newspapers, we, the undersigned representatives of units which make up the Caucasian Native Corps consider it our duty to announce the following:

The Native Division, which had now been made into a corps, from the very beginning joined the revolution decisively and irrevocably.

The slogans of the division are: (1) Defense of the Fatherland from the foreign enemy; (2) recognition and obedience to the Provisional Government, as the organ of supreme revolutionary authority, which bases itself on the confidence of the organs of revolutionary democracy—the Soviet of Workers, Soldiers, and Peasants Delegates.

By these slogans the Native Division has been guided in the past, and by the same slogans the Native Corps intends to be guided in the future.

Any imputations against the native corps we shall consider as provocatory.

[Signed] Chairman of the Corps Committee, Colonel

Sultan-Krim Girey.

Physician of the Kabardin Cavalry Regiment, Shogenov.

Lieut.-Col. of the Osetin Cavalry Regiment, Dzugaev.

Top Sergeant of the Cherkess Cavalry Regiment, Luka Popov.

Sergeant of the Ingush Cavalry Rgt., D. Mankiev.

Top Sergeant Second Dagestan Cavalry Rgt., Mutalim Rolizanov.

22d Hospital Company, Semen Razusavin.

Three days later this Savage Division surrendered on condition that it should be sent home to the Caucasus to rest.<sup>1</sup>

The crisis disclosed as by a flash of lightning where was the seat of real power in the capital. It was from Smolny, the headquarters of the All-Russian Soviet and the Petrograd Soviet, and not from the Winter Palace, that the orders were issued declaring in the name of the Soviet's Committee for Combating Counter-Revolution that Kornilov was a counter-revolutionist and an enemy of the revolution; and calling on the revolutionary soldiers not to obey his orders or the orders of his officers demanding the advance on Petrograd. It was from Smolny, and not from the Winter Palace, that the orders were issued that mobilized the Bolshevik sailors at Kronstadt, brought them down to Petrograd and bivouacked them in the Field of Mars. It was from Smolny, and not from the Winter Palace, that orders were issued sending platoons of Bolshevik sailors to guard the Winter Palace, removing Kerensky's cadet Guards and making him a virtual prisoner during the remaining hours of the Kornilov crisis. It was from Smolny that the orders were issued that called up the workingmen from the Viborg, opened the Petrograd arsenal, and armed these workingmen—one of the first actual beginnings of

Osetin Infantry Brigade, Plantza Khastinaev.

Staff of the Command of the Corps, Prikutnevich.

Hospital Company, Top Sergeant Butkov.

Cavalry Machine-Gun Detachment, Obukhov.

Top Sergeant of the 8th Don Cossack Division, Yakov Posnikov.

Commander of the Staff Division, Sesoyev.

Secretary A. Sukharev.

<sup>1</sup> War-weariness was universal in the army and by no means confined to Bolshevik regiments.

the Red Guard. It was from Smolny that the orders were issued to dig trenches around the environs of Petrograd, set up machine-guns in advantageous positions, put large guns on the roofs of the more stable buildings, and prepared the revolutionary city for forcible resistance to the Kornilov advance.

However, it was not force at all that finally disposed of Kornilov's much vaunted advance. It was propaganda,—the new culture, or the new poison, whichever you please to call it. What the Petrograd palaces had anticipated was:

Kornilov will advance from the front. He is the great Cossack general, commander-in-chief of the Cossack armies. He will have half a million of the bravest Cossacks. He will have the support of the Army and Navy League. He will have the support of the Chevaliers of St. George. He will have the open or covert support of all the Allied embassies and military missions. He will come to Petrograd. He will overthrow this weak, vacillating Kerensky government. He will reestablish law and order here, and discipline in the army at the front. Everything will be happy and secure when Kornilov reaches Petrograd.

What really happened was that Kornilov had with him when he left for Petrograd seventy thousand picked troops. He reached Pskov with less than forty thousand, and on the morning he was to move on Petrograd twenty thousand of these forty thousand refused to march. In the circumstances, Kornilov threw up his hands, and was taken prisoner without a shot being fired or a man being killed. General Krymov, commanding the Savage Division,

ordering his troops to yield, proceeded to Petrograd where, after an interview with Kerensky, he shot himself.

After the Kornilov affair the Russian masses ceased to feel any confidence in the Cadet party. During the height of the crisis the Cadet ministers deserted their colleagues and hid away in one of the embassies, conferring with the Central Committee of their party.<sup>1</sup> On the day Kornilov presented his ultimatum the Cadet mouthpiece *Ryech* reviewed the first half year of the Revolution in a way to prepare people's minds for a *coup-d'etat*. To a half-year's experiences of failure and disappointment it attributed "the quickly growing and widespread belief that *this* road cannot be followed any longer without risking the utter ruin of the country. And the other conclusion which results from the bitter experience is that a turn to the other, the *right* road, must be sharp and decisive."

In an editorial on September 11th, after recounting that the efforts of the Cadets to straighten out the snarl in the relations between the Provisional Government and Kornilov had constantly been met by the argument, "Should not the Government treat the Kornilovites in just the same manner as it treated the Bolsheviks?" *Ryech* goes on to remark:

This purely formal point of view cannot be maintained, because one can't help seeing that there is a difference between Lenin's followers and the followers of Kornilov: it is the difference between anarchy and statesmanship.

This editorial was taken by the democratic ele-

<sup>1</sup> Zillboorg, *The Passing of the Old Order in Europe*, pp. 116-7.

ments as an indication that the Cadets were implicated in the Kornilov affair and was widely quoted. The next issue of *Ryech* exhibits two and a half columns of blank space, its editorial evidently having been suppressed by the Government. A day later it pleads to keep the "Right" elements in the Ministry on the ground that Kornilov's action has resulted in strengthening the "Left" elements: "Their strengthening in the Capital is already felt at the present time in those concessions which the Government is making by permitting them to arm themselves, which has the risk of serious complications in the future."

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE DEMOCRATIC CONFERENCE

**T**HE Kornilov attempt brought the Bolsheviks their first triumph in the Petrograd Soviet. On September 13th, before the Central Executive Committee and the Executive Committee of Peasants' Delegates, Kameney on their behalf offers a long resolution declaring that the representatives of the propertied elements must be removed from the Provisional Government, demanding a government responsible to the representatives of the toiling masses, calling for the immediate transfer of the estates to peasant committees, workers' control of factories, the annulment of the secret treaties, abolition of capital punishment, freedom of agitation, purging of the army from counter-revolutionary officers, and abolition of all class privileges.

This resolution is voted down, but when offered the same day before the Petrograd Soviet it wins by 279 to 115 votes. As the meeting has not been well attended, it is not certain that the Soviet has gone Bolshevik; so, in order to test the matter, all the officers (*presidium*) resign. At the next meeting, on September 22d, there is a big turn-out, but the Bolshevik resolution is carried by 569 votes against 414 votes for the Menshevik resolution. Accordingly, Tcheidze, Tseretelli, Skobelev, and other trusted leaders who have guided the Soviet of



the capital for a stormy half-year yield up their control to the Bolsheviks and early in October Trotsky becomes chairman. About the same time the Bolsheviks gain the upper hand in the Moscow Soviet.

Thanks to Kornilov's clutch for power, the Red Guard comes again into the situation. Companies of armed workers were much in evidence in the demonstrations of May 3d and 4th. After the July riots the Government sent out search squads which deprived these workingmen of their rifles. Now, with the homicidal Caucasian tribesmen approaching and sudden extermination in near prospect, the Central Executive Committee and Kerensky are glad to open the arsenal and deal out arms to all who will defend them. A fortnight later *Ryech* carries the significant item:

The formation of the Red Guard of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates can be considered as accomplished. In all districts have been organized branches of the staff of the Guard.

The staff is engaged in obtaining arms. Negotiations are being carried on with the Tula and Sormov factories.

It was found necessary first of all to obtain twelve thousand rifles, some machine-guns, and a sufficient quantity of cartridges.

At the moment when Kerensky, Tchernov, Avksentiev, Skobelev, and other of their colleagues were in mortal danger the Cadet ministers—Kokoshkin, Yureniev, and Oldenburg—left the Cabinet. After the Provisional Government was safe Skobelev, Avksentiev, and Zaroudny resigned. The remaining ministers for some time constituted a

“Quinquvirate” or Directory of Five, leaving the other ministries in charge of assistant ministers without portfolio. The five were Kerensky, Nekrasov, Tereshchenko, Admiral Verderevsky, and General Verkhovsky.

One of its first steps is to proclaim Russia a Republic. The terms of the proclamation are:

The revolt of General Kornilov has been suppressed. But the mischief which it has brought into the ranks of the army and into the country is great, and has once more increased the danger which threatens the country and liberty. Considering it essential to put an end to the indefinite nature of the political régime, remembering the unanimity and enthusiasm with which the idea of a republic was greeted at the Moscow Conference, the Provisional Government hereby declares that the political régime of the Russian Empire is a republican régime and proclaims the Russian Republic. The urgent necessity of taking immediate and decisive measures to establish political order, have led the Provisional Government to the decision to place the whole executive power in the hands of five of its members with the Minister-President at their head. The Provisional Government considers the reëstablishment of discipline and the fighting value of the army as its essential duty. Convinced that the only way to bring the country out of its present precarious situation, is by a concentration of all the living forces of the country, the Provisional Government will increase its power by bringing to its bosom representatives of all parties who place the general and permanent interests of their country above the temporary and private interests of their parties and classes. The Provisional Government hopes to complete this work within a few days.

[Signed] MINISTER-PRESIDENT KERENSKY.

[Signed] MINISTER OF JUSTICE ZAROUDNY.

Kerensky himself becomes supreme commander-in-chief and announces the policy of weeding out of the higher command all officers whose political attitude does not inspire confidence. All leading figures at headquarters are to be removed, inasmuch as they must have known of the Kornilov plot. Nevertheless, General Alexiev, arch-monarchist, is made chief of staff. It is decided to cut down the army a third without lessening the number on the fighting line, which had been not over a tenth of the men mobilized. The necessity of getting some five millions of men out of uniform and into working clothes, if Russia is not to be forced out of the war by utter breakdown of production, has become obvious.

The break-up of the Coalition Government results in the calling of another great get-together conference for the purpose of finding the basis for a government which the people will trust and obey. This time it is to be "democratic" and is called not by the Cabinet, but by the Central Executive Committee. Members of the Duma and representatives of the propertied class are not invited. The 1582 delegates—twenty-three of them being women—which make up the Conference are sent by soviets, municipalities, zemstvos, military organizations, trades unions, coöperatives, provisioning committees and nationalist organizations.

The Democratic Conference is a butt for the mirth and scorn of the organs of the gentry and the bourgeoisie. Its uncouth stub-and-twist delegates, reflecting the desires of probably 80 per cent. of the Russian folk, are jeered at as the "conclave of the

master class." Forgetting that the Moscow Conference gave the propertied people excess representation, they speak of themselves as "the ostracized class." The fact that the rough-handed masses have been providing them all their lives with food, warmth, raiment, and pleasure and have never received an equivalent, excites in them not one throb of gratitude or pity. As always, the dominant kept class is selfish and arrogant.

From his study of the physiognomy of the delegates a writer in *Novoye Vremya* concludes that men born with such faces cannot possibly be statesmen. His eye tells him that the neurasthenic type is prevalent among them. He considers attentively the dress of several delegates and finds in every case vulgarity and artificiality. The keynote of his article is that he has unmasked a gang of impostors whom one can regard only with feelings of repugnance and contempt. All of them are masquerading. He doubts if there is a single peasant among them. This supercilious attitude as of the gentleman toward the rabble crops up frequently in the organs of property. The ridicule and sneers are noted and the time is coming when they will be paid for.

At the same time it must be said that the delegates represent organizations rather than the masses comprised in these organizations. They have not been picked by the rank and file for the express purpose of conveying their wishes. They have been named by the officers or executive committees of the popular organizations and have no very clear idea of what it is that their constituents really want. This,

perhaps, is why the will of the conference is vague and contradictory.

Still, the conference is a great window on the Russian democracy and the politics of Revolutionists. Unlike the Moscow Conference, this conference provides for debate. During its nine days (September 27th to October 5th) hundreds of delegates speak and leave no doubt as to what is in the mind of the leaders of the common people. At first Tcheidze, the chairman, tries to limit the speeches, but the audience clamors, "Let them say everything they have come here to say!" and so it is. A peasant who, perhaps, has never made a speech in his life, will talk for an hour and hold his audience. The most pregnant utterance in the conference is that of a peasant-soldier delegate who declares: "We will not give up our rifles till we get our lands."

The staggering task is how to weave a generally acceptable program from such widely divergent desires. The debate flows on day after day and the heart of Russia is quite unpacked. Whenever the chairman announces a recess the members rush out into the corridors to eat sandwiches and drink tea. The sessions last sometimes till four o'clock in the morning and the conference seems never to flag in its anxious groping for solutions.

The great question is whether the new government shall be constituted by this democracy, or shall it again include men representing the propertied class? Nearly all the well-known men, especially the former ministers, advocate coalition. After long debate the vote stands:

For coalition .....	766
Against coalition .....	688
Not voting .....	38

However, this show of preference is completely fogged by what follows. An amendment is offered, "Outside the coalition remain those elements, of the Cadet as well as of other parties, who are involved in the Kornilov conspiracy." The vote is:

For exclusion .....	798
Against exclusion .....	139
Not voting .....	196

Another amendment is pressed: "Outside of the coalition remains the Cadet party." The vote on this results:

For excluding Cadets .....	595
Against excluding Cadets ...	493
Not voting .....	72

The Conference is now in the absurd position of having approved coalition, but ruled out the only element the democracy can coalesce with. Small wonder that when the coalition resolution, amended till it is pure nonsense, comes to a vote the result is

For .....	183
Against .....	813
Not voting .....	80

To straighten out the muddle the *presidium* is enlarged into an executive committee by adding representatives of all parties and groups and is charged with the task of working out a proposal which the majority of the conference will accept.

Meanwhile word is brought that Kerensky is about to announce a new cabinet which will contain repre-



sentatives of the Cadet party and certain millionaire business men of the "Moscow Industrial Group." Tseretelli on behalf of the committee hurries to the Winter Palace to inform the Premier that he dare not ignore the adverse vote on coalition. The next morning Kerensky addresses the committee with an impassioned speech, painting a dark picture of conditions, insisting that an all-Socialist Government will endanger the country, and threatening to resign if bourgeois elements are excluded.

The committee is impressed, and the next day Tseretelli on its behalf comes before the conference with a series of resolutions which the conference passes by overwhelming majorities. It is agreed: that a representative body shall be created to which the Government shall be responsible until the convening of the Constituent Assembly in December; that if the propertied are invited to join the Government there shall be added to this body delegates from the bourgeois groups, although the numerical preponderance of the democratic elements must be preserved.

These resolutions are offered on the supposition that the chiefs of all the parties have already consented to them in committee, so that they will meet with no group opposition. But the Bolshevik leaders, Trotsky, Lunacharsky, and Kamenev, object to the representation of the bourgeois in the "Preliminary Parliament" or Pre-Parliament, and announce that they will vote against the motion as a whole, for it is not the motion to which they had pledged themselves in committee. Stung by the charge, Tseretelli cries: "The next time I have dealings

with Bolsheviks I will insist on the presence of a notary and two secretaries!"

The Bolshevik Nogin shouts back that he will give Tseretelli five minutes to retract his insinuation and, as Tseretelli obstinately remains silent, most of the Bolsheviks leave the hall amidst a tremendous uproar. Men run into the hallways, screaming and pleading. In the end the project is adopted by 839 to 106 votes.

The bolting of a large and growing faction deals a blow to the hopes of a unified popular support for the new coalition. Many of the delegates begin to suspect that they are being "done" and when, on the next day, Miss Spiridonova, Social Revolutionist of the Left, tells the peasants that the adoption of coalition has cheated them out of the land, her words are greeted by an ominous roar.

On October 5th the Democratic Conference closed after approving a first list of members of the Pre-Parliament. The sitting ended with the delegates standing up and singing the "Marseillaise" and the "Internationale."

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE PRE-PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE RUSSIAN REPUBLIC

**I**T is evident to all that the Provisional Government is ceasing to be the real master of the country. Save its paid servants, scarcely any one will obey its decrees if he does not wish to do so. By and large the peasants do not heed it; the workers do not heed it; the common soldiers do not heed it. The purpose of creating the Pre-Parliament is to bring the Government sensibly closer to the masses so that they will have confidence in it, and, having confidence in it, will obey it and will help make others obey it.

The flouting of lawful authority is becoming more common and anarchy threatens to prevail, because the Government is not thought of by the people as "our" Government. More and more it is the Soviet that is "ours"; it is the Soviet that they believe in and obey; whereas the Provisional Government is regarded as an alien thing, responsible to nobody, which is chiefly concerned in blocking the self-fulfilment of the Revolution in order to protect the interests of the small propertied class.

The purpose, then, in setting up the Pre-Parliament is to provide a representative body to which the Ministry shall be responsible just as in most countries the Ministry is responsible to parliament.

The institution may or may not avail to win popular confidence for the Government. At any rate, the expedient is worth trying; for, if we go on much longer as we are, the Soviets, who have *de-facto* power, will have to take over *de-jure* power, just as Lenin has been urging from the first.

Alas, the arrogance and blindness of the propertied class prevents the experiment even being tried! Its influential members are too proud to serve as ministers in a government responsible to this body. They will not consent to enter the Cabinet unless the widely heralded Preliminary Parliament is whittled down into a mere "Council," i. e., a consultative body. So we are back where we were—an irresponsible Coalition Ministry. That Tcheidze, Tsere-telli and other "Moderates" should have ever had anything to do with this abortion shows how little grip they had on political realities.

Russia has never known anything but the rule of one section or another of the propertied class. The laborer has been a man owned. About the time of Shakspeare he became a serf. In the time of John Milton he began to be bought and sold and he remained a slave down to about the end of the eighteenth century. Then, he became again a serf until his emancipation in 1861. Such being the historical background, to the gentry and factory lords of Russia it is inconceivable that government should arise out of the common purpose of working people—as we Americans have seen it arise hundreds of times in our frontier settlements. They honestly think that only "men of large affairs,"—i. e., members of their class—have the capacity to administer a de-

partment of government. They little dream that soon there will be "People's Commissaries," some of whom need not shrink from comparison with the best cabinet officials of our day. The bourgeois imagine that without them there can be no Government; if they stand aloof utter anarchy will reign.

So they make their terms: Kornilov is not to be prosecuted for high treason; the propertied are to be formidably represented in the Council (120 seats out of 305, or about 39 per cent.) by representatives of their own choosing; the Council is to have the right to ask questions, but not to interpellate the Government; and the Council is not to have the power to change the government. The Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries, who know how unpopular the Cadets are and utterly overwhelm them in the elections,—who, nevertheless, think the sky will fall if there are no big business men in the Government,—agree to these terms: Four men of the Moscow Group—Konovalov, Kishkin, Tretiakov, and Smirnov—take portfolios and, on October 8th, the fourth and last Provisional Government is announced as follows: Socialists: Kerensky, Nikitin, Maliantovitch, Prokopovitch, Avksentiev, and Gvozdev. Non-Socialists: Tereshchenko, Konovalov, Bernatsky, Salazkin, Kartashev, Kishkin, Smirnov, Tretiakov, Liverovsky, Verkhovsky, and Verderevsky.

In its declaration to the country the reconstituted Government says in part:

. . . The wind of anarchy is blowing through the land. The thrust of the foreign foe is increasing in force. Counter-revolutionary elements are lifting their heads in the

hope that the interminable crisis in State authority, combined with the weariness which the entire country experiences, will facilitate their assassination of the liberty of the Russian people.

Meantime the news from the provinces daily becomes worse. Under the heading "Anarchy," in big black letters, the papers give accounts in short telegrams of events in the country. Peasants set at defiance regulations of the provisioning committees concerning the purchase of grain. The peasants are chasing the bailiffs of the lords off the estates. Drunkenness is spreading, owing to the multiplication of illicit stills. Here and there a soviet takes charge of its town and runs it until a government expeditionary force arrives. In the cities the daily list of robberies includes an increasing number of the most barefaced and impudent kind. The number of questionable resorts and night clubs is multiplying. Gambling is enormously on the increase.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The reaction of the working-people to the increasing profligacy of the rich is significant. *Izvestia* on October 6th publishes the following:

"The owner of the restaurant Medved [The Bear] in Petrograd informed his employees that in the near future a club will be opened in connection with the restaurant. Instead of expressing joy over the forthcoming increase in income, the waiters together with other employees protested against the formation of a new nest of gambling and dissipation. The owner replied that despite the protest the club will be organized.

"The employees authorized comrade Tolkachev to take up with the authorities this matter. The local commissariat and the commissary of the Provisional Government informed the employees that this matter of gambling and its prohibition depends on whether the by-laws of the club will be approved. In the district court which registers and approves all societies the employees were informed that their complaint will be taken into consideration when the by-laws of the new club will be considered.

"At the same time the employees informed the owner that besides the Government's order and supervision they themselves will organize



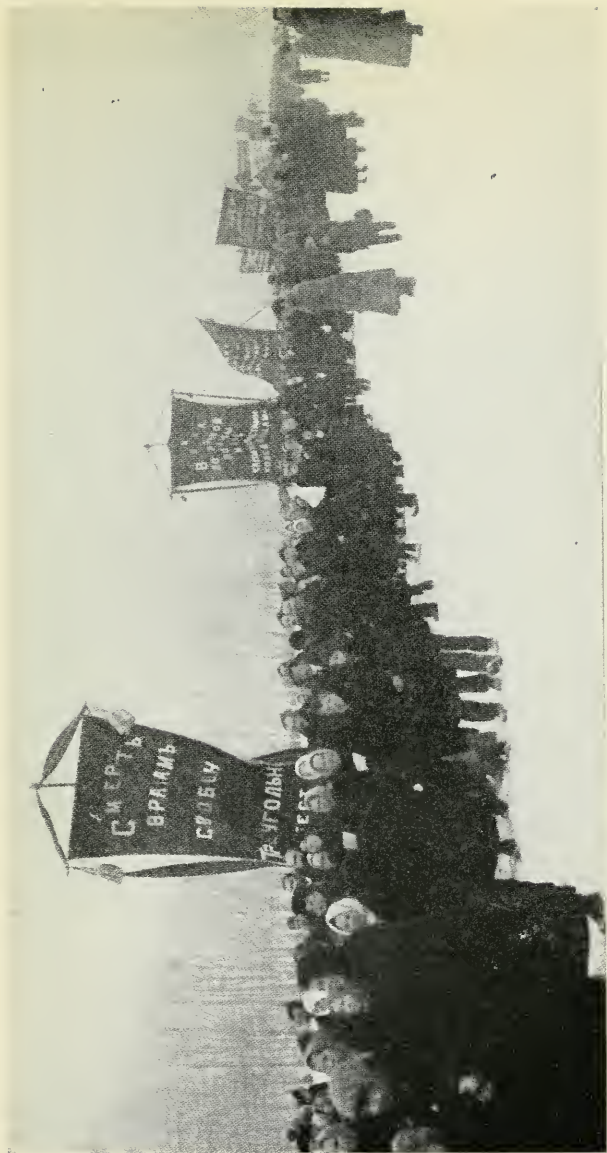
The Provisional Government contemplates the most energetic measures to combat the malady. With a view to consolidating and unifying authority it decides to institute local committees, directly depending on the Provisional Government, in which representatives of local public opinion will take part. Commissaries in the disaffected districts or the local military authorities will take charge in case of disorders, but they will act only in strict unison with the local committees. This prospect of enlisting local people in order to procure obedience shows how the Government is beginning to realize its own impotence.

On October 20th the Pre-Parliament is opened. Not a hand-clap greets Kerensky when he appears and addresses it. He speaks of the "tremendous anarchy which is developing in more and more parts of our territory." "Productivity and the organization of the national economic life is falling and is becoming worse every day." "All remedial measures have broken against the complete indifference and apathy and unintelligence of the wide masses concerning their responsibility to the state and freedom. . . . With every day the provisioning situation at the fronts is becoming worse."

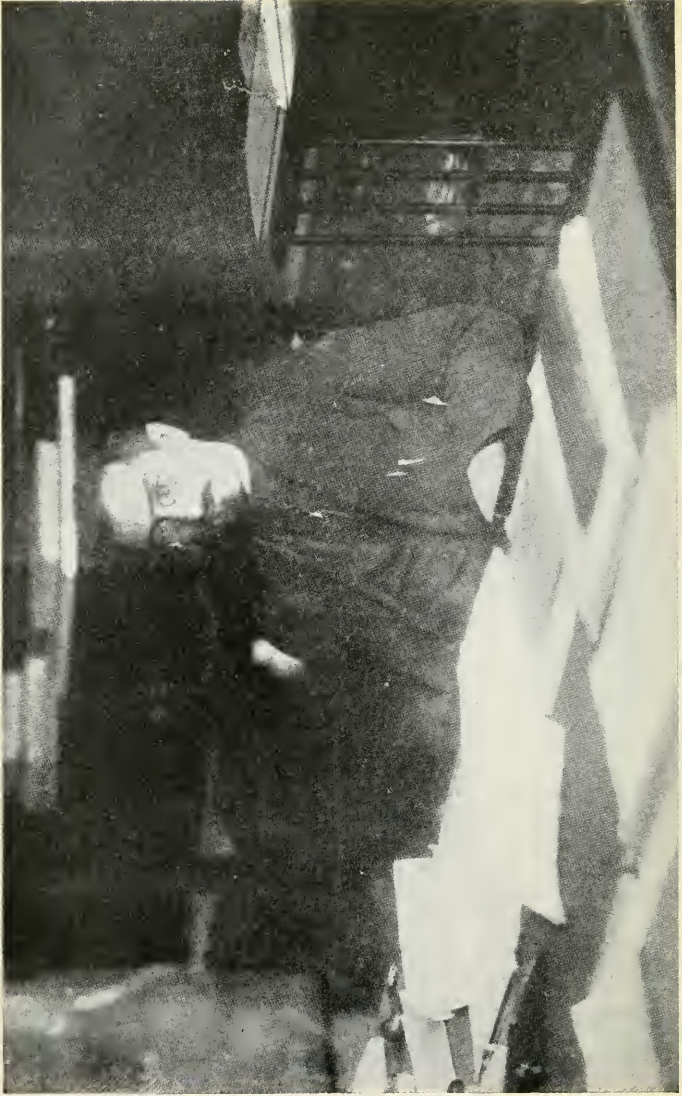
Kerensky then offers the Presidential chair to Madame Breshko-Breshkovskaya as the oldest member, who is installed amid tumultuous applause. Avksentiev is elected president of the body.

As the meeting is about to close Trotsky obtains a supervision and with their own efforts will prevent any kind of gambling games besides puzzles, preference, and 'Fools'.

"This statement of the employees compelled the owner to give up the profitable idea of a gambling club."



Peace demonstration in Petrograd, December 17th, 1917



**Proshian**  
People's Commissary of Posts and Telegraphs

the floor and scathingly characterizes the conduct of Kerensky and his political allies. He says:

The officially proclaimed aim of the Democratic Conference which was called by the Central Executive Committee of Soviets was the abolition of the irresponsible personal régime which led to "Kornilovism," and the creation of a responsible government, capable of ending the war and assuring the convocation of the Constituent Assembly at the appointed time. Meanwhile, behind the back of the Democratic Conference, by means of secret deals between Kerensky, the Cadets, the leaders of the Social Revolutionists, and the Mensheviks, just the opposite results were attained; a government is created in which and around which both the open and the secret Kornilovists are playing the leading part. Irresponsibility of this authority is from now on affirmed and proclaimed formally. The Council of the Russian Republic is to be merely consultative.

At the eighth month of the revolution the Government creates for itself this blind. The propertied elements enter into this council in excessive numbers. The same Cadet party which until yesterday insisted on the dependence of the Provisional Government on the State Duma, now insists on the independence of the Provisional Government from the Council of the Republic. The gist of the matter is that the bourgeois classes, who are directing the policy of the Provisional Government, made it their aim to pull down the Constituent Assembly! [Noise and cries: "It's a lie!"] The propertied classes who are provoking a civil rebellion, are now beginning to suppress it and are openly steering toward "the bony hand of hunger," which must strangle the revolution and, first of all, the Constituent Assembly. No less criminal is the Petrograd policy of the bourgeoisie and its government. After forty months of war the capital is fatally threatened. In reply to this a

plan is put forth to move the Government to Moscow.<sup>1</sup> The idea of surrendering the revolutionary capital to German troops does not bring forth any indignation from the bourgeois classes. [Noise.] On the contrary it is accepted as one link of the general policy which must pave the way for their counter-revolutionary conspiracy, instead of admitting that the salvation of the country lies in the conclusion of peace, that over the heads of all governments a definite proposal of peace should openly be thrown, which would make virtually impossible any further carrying on of the war. The Provisional Government, at the order of the Cadets and the Allied Imperialists, without any sense and aim, is dragging on the fatal burden of war. At the time when Bolshevik sailors and soldiers are perishing as a result of the mistakes and crimes of others the so-called supreme commander-in-chief continues to smash the Bolshevik press, as for instance the *Molot* in Minsk.

The leading parties in the Council willingly serve as a screen for this entire policy. We, the faction of Social-Democrats-Bolsheviks declare; with this government of treason to the people—

[Noise and cries—"Enough! Out! Down!"—compel the speaker to interrupt his speech.]

In reply to the noise boisterous applause is heard from the seats of the Bolsheviks.

In the Center somebody says: "Citizen Trotsky, you prepared the surrender of Petrograd." The Chairman Avksentiev calls Trotsky to order for his last expression. The clamor, however, does not cease for a long time.

Trotsky continues:

With councils aiding counter-revolution we have nothing

<sup>1</sup> Here Trotsky accuses his opponents of contemplating two steps which later he himself takes—viz., dispersing the Constituent Assembly and removing the seat of Government to Moscow.



in common. The revolution is in danger, and at a time when the armies of Wilhelm threaten Petrograd the Government of Kerensky and Konovalov are getting ready to run from Petrograd in order to turn Moscow into a stronghold of counter-revolution. Upon leaving this Council we appeal for vigilance and bravery on the part of the workers, soldiers, and peasants [Voices from the seats: "German!"]. Petrograd is in danger, the revolution is in danger, the people are in danger. The Government is contributing to this danger. The ruling parties are helping it. Only the people itself can save itself and the country. We are appealing to the people: long live an immediate, honest, democratic peace, all power to the soviets, all land to the people, long live the Constituent Assembly. [Applause in the Bolshevik benches.]

Amid great confusion he leaves the platform and the room. He is followed by all the Bolsheviks. Thereupon the meeting adjourns.



## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE SOVIET'S PEACE TERMS AND THE "FOURTEEN POINTS"

**T**HROUGH months of discussion the Russian Socialists have been gradually clarifying their ideas as to how to end the war, and now these crystallize in a body of instructions (*nakaz*) to the delegate who is to be sent to the proposed conference among the Allies at Paris. The Central Executive Committee names Skobelev, Menshevik and formerly Minister of Labor under Kerensky, as its delegate, but, as the Inter-Allied Conference fails to convene, the peace program of Russian democracy does not come before the world.

It is an interesting fact that, although this program has taken form as early as October 19th, it shows much agreement with the famous "Fourteen Points," which President Wilson offered the world as his basis for peace in an address to Congress on January 8, 1918, *eighty-one days afterward*.

Below are the proposals of the Soviet leaders and beside them are printed for comparison the substance of the corresponding points of the American President.

#### THE SOVIETS

The new treaty must be public in regard to the problem of the aims of war. The treaty must be constructed on the principle: "Peace without annexations and

#### THE PRESIDENT

indemnities on the basis of the right of nations to self-determination."

#### TERRITORIAL PROBLEMS

(1) The removal of German troops from the occupied Russian territories must be an absolute condition of peace. Russia gives complete self-determination to Poland, Lithuania, and Latvia;

(2) Turkish Armenia receives complete autonomy and later, also, the right to self-determination after local government is established there and international guarantees have been created;

(3) The Alsace-Lorraine problem must be solved by a plebiscite of the Alsace-Lorraine population on the basis of complete freedom of suffrage. The plebiscite must be organized by local governments after the removal of the troops of both coalitions from the province;

(4) Belgium must be reestablished within her former frontiers. Her losses must be repaid to her from an international fund;

(5) Serbia and Montenegro must be reestablished and must receive material aid from an international fund. Serbia must have access to the Adriatic Sea. Bosnia and Herzegovina must have autonomy;

(6) The disputed territories of the Balkans receive temporary autonomy, which is to be followed by a plebiscite;

(7) Rumania is reestablished within her former frontiers with a guarantee that she will give full self-determination to Dobroudjia, which receives immediately a

VI The evacuation of all Russian territory . . .

XIII An independent Polish state should be erected . . .

XII The other nationalities now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolessted opportunity of autonomous development . . .

VIII . . . The wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine . . . should be righted . . .

VII Belgium . . . must be evacuated and restored . . .

XI Serbia and Montenegro should be evacuated; unoccupied territories restored; Serbia accorded free and secure access to the sea.

XI The relations of the several Balkan states to one another (to be) determined by friendly counsel along historically established lines of allegiance and nationality . . .

XI Roumania . . . should be evacuated . . .

temporary autonomy. Rumania agrees to carry out at once the provision of the Berlin Treaty regarding Jews and must recognize that they have equal rights with other Rumanian citizens;

(8) The Italian districts of Austria receive autonomy, which is followed by a plebiscite as to what state they prefer to belong to;

(9) Germany's colonies are returned to her;

(10) Greece and Persia are restored;

#### FREEDOM OF THE SEAS

All straits which give access to internal seas, as well as the Suez and the Panama Canals, are neutralized. Commercial navigation is declared free. The torpedoing of commercial ships is prohibited.

#### INDEMNITIES

All warring countries renounce claims to payment of all kinds of expenses, direct or hidden (maintenance of war prisoners). All indemnities collected during the war are repaid.

#### ECONOMIC TERMS

Commercial treaties are not to be part of the peace treaties. Each side is independent in its commercial policy, and in the peace treaty she cannot be compelled to accept an obligation to conclude a certain treaty or not to conclude it. However, all states must obligate themselves by the peace treaty not to carry on an economic blockade after the war; not to conclude separate tariff unions; and to give the right of the most favored nation to all countries without exception.

IX A readjustment of the frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality.

II Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war . . .

XII The Dardanelles should be permanently opened . . . to the ships and commerce of all nations . . .

III The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance.

## GUARANTEES OF PEACE

Peace is concluded at a peace congress through plenipotentiaries elected by the organs of peoples' representatives. The terms of peace are ratified by parliaments.

Secret diplomacy is abolished; all agree not to conclude secret treaties. Such treaties are proclaimed as contradictory to international law and void. Also void are all the treaties before they are ratified by parliaments.

Gradual disarmament on land and on sea and transition to a system of militia.

"The League of Peace" proposed by Wilson may be a valuable victory for international justice only on the conditions:

- (1) obligatory participation in it of all states on a footing of equal rights;
- (2) democratization of foreign policies as indicated above.

I Open covenants of peace openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view.

IV Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety.

XIV A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.

The American proposals are riper, more specific and more practical than the Russian-Socialist proposals, but it is impossible to recognize the high statesmanship of the former without thereby conceding the statesmanship of the latter.

## CHAPTER XXV

### THE NOVEMBER REVOLUTION

**A**FTER the September attempt the fore-fighters for the common people lived in constant dread of a blow from one quarter or another. Kornilov with his Cossacks and his "Savage" Division had not succeeded but still there were the Germans. Many of the propertied took a malicious satisfaction in the perilous plight of Petrograd. Rodzi-anko, President of the defunct Duma, declared that the surrender of Petrograd to the Germans would be no great misfortune. He pointed out that upon the entry of the Germans into Riga the soviets were dissolved and strict order was established with the aid of the old police. No doubt the Baltic Fleet would be lost, but then it was so infected with Bolshivism that its loss would be no great calamity for the country. There can be no doubt that in private the Russian upper class were by no means downhearted at the prospect of the loss of the capital because, when by peace treaty it should come back to them, its proletariat would have been crushed between the rolls of German militarism.

In the middle of October it came out that general headquarters was demanding the despatch of two thirds of the Petrograd garrison to the front. To the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet this seemed strange. Petrograd menaced by the

Germans, yet the larger part of its garrison to be removed! Was the idea to let the Germans into the capital in order that Wilhelm's bayonets should restore Property to its rightful place in the social scheme? The Sovietists were suspicious and would not approve the demand for the removal of two thirds of the Petrograd garrison without light on the military considerations which inspired this demand.

The need of somebody to examine such propositions was felt and so surged up the idea of establishing alongside the Soldiers' Section of the soviets the Military Revolutionary Committee (generally referred to as the M. R. Committee). Thus casually was forged the instrument by which the Bolshevik overturn was accomplished.

The First All-Russian Congress of Soviets adjourned in June leaving behind it a Central Executive Committee of 250 members which for four months has been speaking and acting for the Russian masses. Its political composition reflects the preponderance of the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries in June. Meanwhile, in the mill-race of revolutionary events, the Bolsheviks, as a straight-out proletarian party, have captured numerous city soviets and believe that they will have the majority in the next Congress. Accordingly, the demand grows stronger for the convening of the Second Congress of Soviets. The Central Executive Committee, seeing the handwriting on the wall, resists as long as it can; but presently it is settled that the Congress is to meet in Petrograd on November 7th.

With the Provisional Government a mere shell, and with the prospect of the gathering on November



7th of a host of newly chosen delegates from all over Russia the majority of whom would desire to see the Soviets take charge of the country, the Bolsheviks believe the moment opportune for seizing the reins of power. Why, it may be asked, are they loath to await the meeting of the Constituent Assembly which is to be elected the last week of November? The answer is that they fear a treasonous opening of the front to the Germans and, furthermore, they realize that, if the Germans should take Petrograd, the revolution might collapse.

The events of the November revolution have been described in vivid and gripping fashion<sup>1</sup> by outsiders. Now in the "People's Calendar for 1919," published by the "Union of Communes of the Northern District" we have for the first time the stories of insiders. First let Podvoisky speak:

On September 22 comrade Lenin called a conspiratorial conference from the most active members of the Central Committee, the Petrograd Committee [Bolshevik party], the military organizations, and representatives of districts. At this conference the question of the rebellion is considered from the point of view of actual execution and with the exception of two votes the entire conference is for it. The next conference, on the 26th of October, which is of a different make-up, discusses the practical problems in connection with the rebellion.

The Petrograd Soviet assumes a leading part. In order to shift the discussion of the problem of the rebellion to the masses a conference of the active party workers of the districts and of the garrison is called on October 30. During the night of the same date comrade Lenin invites myself, Antonov, and Raskolnikov to visit him and sug-

<sup>1</sup> See John Reed, *Ten Days that Shook the World*.

gests that we should organize a Military-Revolutionary Committee from the representatives of the military organization of the party, the soldiers' section of the Petrograd Soviet, and the military organization of the Left Social Revolutionaries.

At the same time, with comrade Lenin we draw up a general outline of the principal stages of seizure of authority. From this moment the question of the overturn is passed on for discussion to the masses themselves, among whom the necessity of the transfer of all authority to the Soviets has become more and more insistent. The soldiers and the proletariat, taught by the bitter experience of the July days, begin to consider seriously the historic role which they are to carry.

The Military-Revolutionary Committee begins to prepare its plan of action. During the next few days at conferences of the soldiers of the garrison an accounting of forces is made, and the forces are constantly growing. Emissaries sent by us to the northern front, to Finland, and to the cities in the vicinity of Petrograd, are returning with reports as to the readiness of all military units to support us at the decisive moment.

At the meetings of the Petrograd Soviet the matter is hotly debated and all our chances for victory are weighed.

On November 3d the Military-Revolutionary Committee sends commissaries to all regiments. These commissaries have divided the city into districts, and have been gradually introducing the dictatorship of the soviets even a few days before the overturn.

Simultaneously the Military-Revolutionary Committee mobilized the Red Guard and placed patrols to guard bridges, factories, and shops, as well as party and soviet organizations.

On the night of November 3d the representatives of the Military-Revolutionary Committee came to the staff of the Petrograd District and demanded that the staff be turned

over to the jurisdiction of the Military-Revolutionary Committee. As the staff refused, the Military-Revolutionary Committee thereupon resolved to declare void all orders of the staff.

During the same day the Military-Revolutionary Committee began to organize the apparatus for provisioning the population during the rebellion.

Letts who were sent from the front by our emissaries began to arrive, and then sailors from Kronstadt and Viborg, who were called out by us and who were hostile to the Provisional Government. In the place of the forces who were guarding the old C. E. C. of Soviets the Red Guard was brought into Smolny. The "conciliators" of the C. E. C. led by Tcheidze vanished. In general during the last days the leaders of the Mensheviks and the Right Social Revolutionaries, Tseretelli, Lieber, Dan, Avksentiev, and others, disappeared from the horizon.

The plan for occupying all basic points was finally completed on November 6th. The troops were divided into three groups. The first group surrounded by a ring the Winter Palace and all the staffs. A picked group was stationed to ward off all possible attacks on Smolny. A third group defended the approaches to Petrograd. Part of these troops surrounded also all the cadet schools.

The troops were ready and word was awaited to begin the storming of the Palace and of the staffs. But lack of organization of communication compelled the leaders of the rebellion to assume the direct work of organization, and this interfered with and prolonged the operations.

Absence of a single command created uncertainty, hesitation, and delay in orders and actions. The greatest difficulty was the coördinating of the operations of three groups of soldiers.

At three o'clock in Smolny have gathered all the leaders: myself, Antonov, Chudnovsky, and Yermeev, who at a hasty conference considered and reviewed our situation.

In accordance with the reports of the scouts the Provisional Government had no aid near Petrograd. The troops which were called by the Government from the front did not respond.

It is becoming dark. Soldiers are not relieved, cold and hunger increases the grumbling against the delay in operations. Upon returning from Smolny the leaders begin to draw in the ring of troops around the Winter Palace. Soon the troops surround Palace Square and block all exits from it. At six o'clock we connect the Palace telephones and summon the Provisional Government to surrender arms, but it refuses. Then in the Peter and Paul Fortress and on the cruiser "Aurora" guns are made ready for action.

In order to direct operations Antonov went to the "Aurora" and I went to the Peter and Paul Fortress. Comrade Antonov was instructed to prepare for gun action and for landing of the sailors for storming the Palace. At eight o'clock in the evening spokesmen headed by Comrade Chudnovsky were sent to the Winter Palace.

Chudnovsky suggested to the members of the Provisional Government that they should surrender to the Military-Revolutionary Committee. Palchinsky, the acting governor-general, instead of a reply made a speech to his troops, asking them to hold out till the morning, when reinforcements would arrive from the front. Part of the troops began to hesitate. Heartened by it, Palchinsky ordered that the spokesmen be detained, and even threatened to shoot them.

But a short speech by Chudnovsky about the uselessness of any further resistance had the proper influence on the Palace troops. And just at the moment when the Provisional Government became encouraged by the firmness of one part of its troops, another part of them, consisting of Chevaliers of St. George, soldiers of shock battalions, and the Woman's Battalion, laid down arms.

Only cadets remained on the side of the government.

Part of them were on barricades near entrances to the Winter Palace and another part of them went down to the basements of the palace and decided to defend themselves from there as long as possible.

At that time government artillery came out to fire upon our forces, but our ambushade on Morskaya attacked it, captured two guns and at once trained them on the Winter Palace. This had a decisive influence on the mood of the remaining defenders.

. . . Seeing that the spokesmen were not returning we issued an order to draw in the circle round the Winter Palace, bring the reserves closer, aim the canions, move up the machine guns, throw forward the principal forces to the corner of the Admiralty, and advance closer to the walls of the garden of the Winter Palace. We arrived at the barracks of the Second Fleet Company in order to move forward the reserves of the sailors. While we were there two generals were brought in there who give some unheard-of names.

Comrade Yeremeev recognizes in them the commanding officer of the Petrograd District Bagratuni and the Vice-Minister of War, Prince Tumanov. The sailors want to shoot them, but at our insistent demand they are taken to the fortress. It came out later that Prince Tumanov was released and was killed on the streets, but it is not known by whom. While we were making the rounds of the positions we were stopped on the corner of Nevsky and Sadovaya by a deputation from the City Duma, who asked us to allow them to go to the Winter Palace and negotiate for the purpose of preventing bloodshed.

We pointed out to them the danger of such a trip and the inevitable firing from both sides, and they decided to go to the General Staff, hoping to communicate with the Winter Palace from there, but they did not succeed in doing so. When we reached the palace soldiers told us that a shock battalion and the Woman's Battalion had just come

out from the palace and surrendered. They had been disarmed and sent to the Peter and Paul Fortress. We then went to the fortress, where we learned from our commander, Comrade Blagonravov, that complete surrender of government troops is taking place in the Winter Palace. Thereupon, with Blagonravov; we visited the barracks of the Pavlovsk and Preobrazhensky Regiments. Here soldiers standing around bonfires were celebrating victory. Troops of them went to the Winter Palace. Receiving from the soldiers confirmation of the surrender, we went to the palace without any precautions with the lights of our automobile burning. But as soon as our automobile got on the bridge, across the Winter Palace ditch, near the Hermitage, we were met by machine-gun fire from the barricades. Only the coolness and heroism of the chauffeur, who backed at full speed, saved us from being shot. I instinctively dropped to the floor of the automobile and Yermeev and Blagonravov jumped out on the pavement. The chauffeur quickly got the automobile out of range of the fire.

Confusion spread among the soldiers who were following us. After a short explanation we succeeded in restoring order among the small units and they again began to move on the Winter Palace. An order was given to Blagonravov to return immediately to the Peter and Paul Fortress and to open fire. Soon the first shot from the fortress thundered. As soon as the guns began to talk and shells began hitting the Winter Palace the last hesitations ended.

The cadets run out from behind the barricades and begin to shout that they surrender. Then our troops enter the palace in great masses. A search is made and the Provisional Government, found in one of the rooms of the palace, is arrested. Kerensky is not here for he escaped beforehand. The ministers are led out in the square.

Some of the soldiers want to use violence against them, but the workers speak against lynchings, and the Provisional

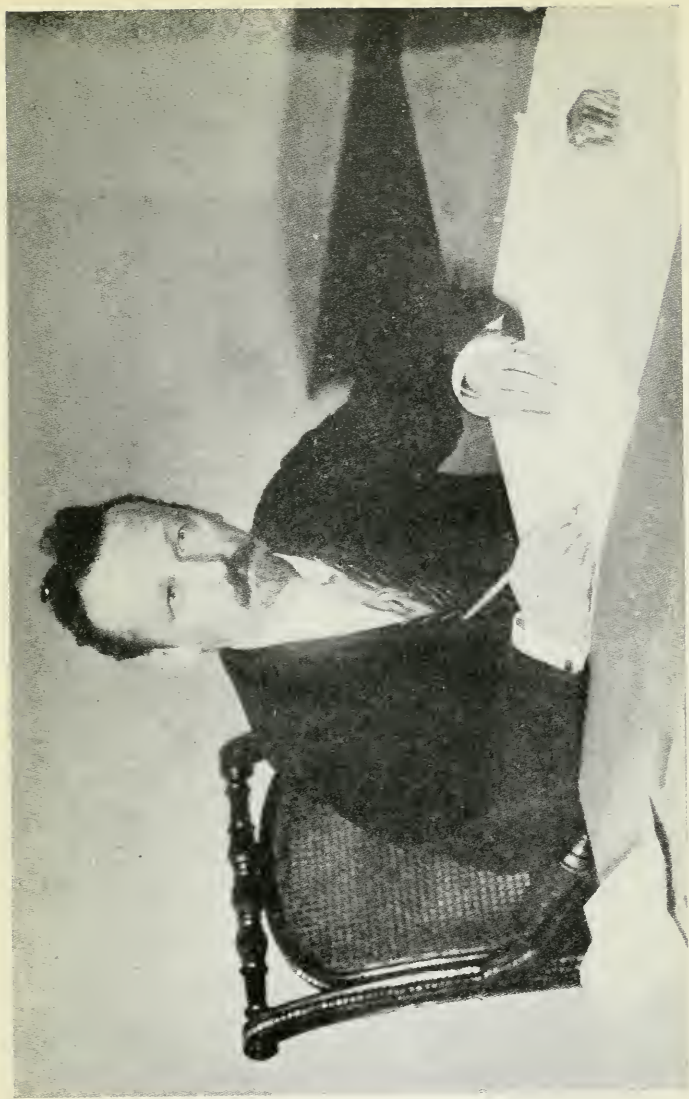


Government, surrounded by a close ring of soldiers, is taken to the Peter and Paul Fortress. In the meanwhile order is reëstablished in the Winter Palace. The attempts of some groups of soldiers to take valuables are put down decisively by the Red Guards.

The sailors and the more intelligent soldiers assume guard of the property of the tsars, which has become people's property. Troops are lining up on Palace Square. Detachments are sent to occupy the staffs, all the ministries, the telegraph, telephone exchange, etc.

From another angle Antonov of the Military Revolutionary Committee tells the tale:

From his hiding-place Comrade Lenin communicated with us in Finland and advised us to seize our opportunity and prepare an armed uprising for the support of the Petrograd workers. It seemed to him also possible that in case of necessity a part of the troops could be taken from the northern front and brought to Petrograd. He said so in a conversation with comrades Podvoisky, Nevsky, and myself in his apartment on the Viborg side where he was hiding at that time. During this conversation Comrade Lenin defended his idea very energetically against the skeptical arguments of Comrade Podvoisky. The same day I had a talk with Zinoviev and remember his saying: "I will be with you for an armed rebellion if you can prove to me that we could hold authority for at least two weeks." After the talk with Lenin I entered into relations with Dybenko, because he had great influence in the Central Committee of the Baltic Fleet, and I discovered that in spite of Lenin's expectations this Central Committee could send for the support of a Petrograd uprising only a few mine-layers. Then I went to the northern front, where in Walk I met the representatives of the Lettish Central Committee and was present at a party conference of the



Podvoisky  
Former People's Commissary of Military Affairs



Bolshevik troops guarding the telephone station

Letts. Here I discovered that we cannot expect to have the active support of the northern front, as the units inclined to us are almost counterbalanced by neutral or hostile units. Moreover, those units in sympathy with us were in the front-line trenches and it would be extremely difficult to call them out. The northern territorial convention which was called at the initiative of the Finnish Territorial Committee showed that the Petrograd uprising cannot be threatened by any danger from garrisons stationed in the vicinity of Petrograd. The situation was somewhat unfavorable for us only in Luga and partially in Novgorod. But even there in the soviets a change in our favor was taking place.

The idea of creating the Military-Revolutionary Committee was first suggested by the Bolsheviks, but only in the form of a commission associated with the Staff of the District, which was to consist of representatives of the Central Executive Committee of the Fleet, and of the Petrograd Soviet. But the same day at the plenary session of the Petrograd Soviet a resolution of the Bolsheviks was passed regarding the creation of a revolutionary staff as a counterpoise to the Staff of the District. A resolution protesting against withdrawal of soldiers from Petrograd was also passed.

On October 29th the resolution for a Military-Revolutionary Committee won in the Petrograd Soviet, despite the opposition of the Mensheviks, who called it the Bolshevik Staff for seizure of authority. From the inception of this committee the Menshevik presidium of the C. E. C. tried to combat its growing influence. On its instigation the Commander of the Petrograd District Pokolnikov called on November 1st a conference of the garrison in the staff quarters of the district. At the suggestion of a representative of the Military-Revolutionary Committee this conference was declared to be without authority. In order to counterbalance this conference the Military-

Revolutionary Committee had a conference of its own on November 3d at which seven representatives were elected to the Staff of the District.

November 4th was the day of the Petrograd Soviet. In all military units meetings were arranged and they passed off brilliantly. During that day a change in the attitude in our favor took place in the cavalry regiment stationed near Smolny and in the armored car division.

On November 5th the Military-Revolutionary Committee announced officially the appointment of commissaries in the military units and directed that no orders be obeyed which have not been countersigned by a commissary of the Military-Revolutionary committee. Thanks to our commissaries in the arsenals, it was possible to check the arming of counter-revolutionary elements. Shipment of ten thousand rifles to Novo-Teherkask was prevented. Thereupon the Military-Revolutionary Committee received an ultimatum from the Staff of the District demanding that the order of the Military-Revolutionary Committee "not to obey orders of the staff" should be withdrawn.

The Menshevik representatives Gotz and Bogdanov came to a meeting of the Military-Revolutionary Committee, demanding that it should renounce its policy of seizing authority. Under the influence of some conciliatory elements, especially the Left Social Revolutionaries and Comrade Riazanov, a resolution was adopted, stating that the Military-Revolutionary Committee is not an organ for usurping authority, but was created exclusively for the purpose of defending the interests of the Petrograd garrison and the Petrograd democracy from counter-revolutionary and pogrom attempts. During these days a conflict developed in regard to the Peter and Paul Fortress. The possession of its arsenal was vital to us for the arming of the Petrograd workers while the fortress itself was a key to Petrograd. On the night of November 4th, at a special meeting of the Military-Revolutionary Committee I suggested that



a few companies from the Pavlovsk regiment, who were faithful to us, should be brought into the fortress to seize it, but the majority decided to hold meetings the following day in the fortress in the hope of winning over the garrison to our side. Accordingly, meetings were held at which Comrades Trotsky and Leshevitz spoke and all the units of the garrison adopted a resolution supporting the Military-Revolutionary Committee, so that the fortress fell into our hands without a battle. Energetic distribution of arms to Petrograd workers began immediately.

The Provisional Government became alarmed and attempted an offensive. On the night of November 5th companies of cadets seized the printing-shops of the newspapers *The Soldier* and *Rabochii Put* and put them under seal. On the following day the Provisional Government announced the closing down of those newspapers and the arrest of the authors of articles which had called for an armed insurrection. The government statement also menaced with prosecution the members of the Military-Revolutionary Committee and threatened the rearrest of the Bolsheviks out on bail. At the same time Pokolnikov announced that all the commissaries of the Military-Revolutionary Committee are removed and will be tried. By a secret order which became known to the Military-Revolutionary Committee the staff called to Petrograd the Shock Battalion from Tsarskoe Selo, the School of Officers from Peterhof, and artillery from Pavlovsk. All cadet schools were ordered to be in complete fighting readiness. The bridges were raised and guarded by cadets. Quarters were prepared for the Menshevik C. E. C. in the staff headquarters, while the telephones in Smolny were disconnected.

On the morning of November 6th, by order of the Military-Revolutionary Committee the publication of the suppressed newspapers was resumed. The seals placed on the offices of these newspapers by the Provisional Government



were torn off. Guards were placed in the printing-shops. The Military-Revolutionary Committee also issued several orders: the regimental committees were ordered to bring their regiments into fighting readiness and to await further instructions; measures were taken to prevent the cadets in the vicinity of Petrograd from entering the city, etc. Then an appeal was issued to the population asking for order and assuring that the Military-Revolutionary Committee will resist the counter-revolutionary conspirators.

The Military-Revolutionary Committee appointed a special commission of three, consisting of Podvoisky, Leshevitz, and myself, to prepare plans for the struggle with the Provisional Government. We issued orders to occupy railway depots, lower the bridges, occupy the electric plant, the telegraph, the telephone, the Petrograd telegraph agency, and the State Bank.

Simultaneously a decision was adopted to disperse the "Council of the Republic." This was carried out about 2 P. M. on November 7th. The plan for capturing the Provisional Government in the Winter Palace, proposed by me, was accepted. We learned that on the side of the Government there are only a few companies of cadets, the Woman's Battalion of Death, four guns of the Michael Artillery School and a few armored cars, all concentrated near the Winter Palace. The Cossacks of the 1st, 4th, and 14th Don regiments, with the exception of a small part of the 1st Regiment, refused to obey Kerensky's order to come out in defense of the Provisional Government on the ground that they will not fight against infantry. Hesitation in obeying us was shown only in the Semenov Regiment. The rest of the units came out to the posts assigned them, forming a semicircle near the Winter Palace. It was intended that they should come out on November 7th about noon. By two o'clock a thousand Kronstadt sailors were to arrive on the ship "Aurora" and on mine-layers. They were to land near the Nikolai Bridge in order to begin



High Revolutionary Tribunal  
President, S. Zorin, in center



G. Zinoviev  
President of the Petrograd Soviet



G. Chicherin  
People's Commissary of Foreign Affairs

the attack on the Winter Palace after joining with the Finnish regiment and the Fleet Company. By eleven o'clock in the morning I arrived at the Peter and Paul Fortress, where I made arrangements with the commandant, Blagonravov, to take the necessary measures for firing on the Winter Palace from the fortress guns. Here I also made a draft of the ultimatum from the Military-Revolutionary Committee to the Provisional Government regarding surrender. Twenty minutes were to be given for consideration, after which fire was to open from the Aurora and from the Peter and Paul Fortress. In order to establish co-ordination between the ships and the fortress I went to the "Aurora" and arranged the signals by which fire should be opened. The Aurora was to fire blank cartridges from her six-inch guns. The two mine-layers which had entered the Neva would open real fire.

The Kronstadt sailors were late, arriving only by seven o'clock in the evening. The news came that the staff of the Petrograd District surrenders. I made my way there in an automobile under cross fire from the Winter Palace and from the square. In the staff there were a few soldiers, everywhere there were broken boxes of cartridges and machine-gun ribbons. A few staff officers, scared to the limit, were hiding in the corners. I ordered them to be gathered into one room and to be put under guard, then I went out to the Winter Palace, near which there was shooting. By nine o'clock in the evening the firing from the fortress began, as well as from the "Aurora." From under the arch of the chief staff a cadets' armored car at times covered Million Street, from which the Winter Palace was being attacked by the Preobrazhensky Regiment and the Red Guard. In general the attack on the palace was at that time absolutely unorganized, but its defense was rapidly weakening. The Cossack company left and the guns of the Michael School ceased.

After our artillery opened fire on the palace the cadets

began to give in and the Woman's Battalion of Death capitulated. Those who had surrendered laid their arms on the pavement and went to the barracks in Million Street. Comrade Chudnovsky, who entered into negotiations with the cadets, agreed that they might leave the Winter Palace with their arms, but I set aside the arrangement and made them give up their arms.

Two or three times small groups of attackers succeeded in getting inside the palace but were forced out again or made prisoners by the cadets. Learning finally that there were few cadets remaining Chudnovsky and I led our forces into the palace. There was little resistance and we hurried about in search of the Provisional Government. In one of the rooms we met Palchinsky.

"Don't you know," he said, "that the parties came to an agreement and that the members of the City Duma led by Propokovich are marching to the Winter Palace to lift its siege?"

"Where is the Provisional Government," we asked in reply. He pointed somewhere to the side. At that time cries were heard: "Here! here!" As this proved a false trail, we soon returned to the room, where we were met by Palchinsky, and entered a large room in which were standing a few cadets with their rifles ready. We left the crowd at the door and together with Chudnovsky, holding our hands up, we went to the cadets and asked them to surrender. After some hesitation they turned over to us their rifles. Near the door to the right again cadets in fighting readiness and here again the mobile Palchinsky. He runs out to meet us. He tries to tell us something but Chudnovsky grabs him by the sleeve, pushes him toward the crowd of the soldiers, and cries out: "I've arrested the Governor-General of Petrograd."

The cadets hesitate, but finally after our arguments about the uselessness of resistance they surrender.

In the next room we find the members of the Provisional



Government. They are sitting at the table and altogether seem like a pale-gray shivering spot. I tell them that in the name of the Military-Revolutionary Committee they are arrested.

The former ministers surrender their papers and arms. With difficulty I organize a guard around them, being aided by Finnish sailors who know me. They eject from the room some suspicious looking individuals. Chudnovsky prepares a list of prisoners which is signed by us too. Altogether there are sixteen ministers, all being present except Kerensky who had left Petrograd at eleven o'clock in the morning. This news calls forth furious outbursts in the crowd against Kerensky. Cries are heard: "Shoot at once all the members of the Provisional Government."

Only the presence of ourselves and some tried Bolshevik sailors saves the former ministers from lynching.

It remains only to deliver the "government" to the Peter and Paul Fortress. There is no automobile handy, so we have to lead the ministers afoot. I leave Chudnovsky at the Commissary of the Palace and organize the departure of the prisoners.

It is two o'clock in the morning. The ministers are surrounded by fifty picked sailors and Red Guards. We leave the palace and come out into the darkness of the square.

Suddenly from the opposite end of the square shots are fired. The convoy is immediately disorganized. In a few minutes order is reestablished, but already five ministers are missing. On all sides are heard cries:

"Why look at them, stab them all on the spot, or they will all escape!"

The crowd draws closer but the convoy holds fast and energetically thrusts the crowd aside.

Marching swiftly, we reach the Troitsky Bridge. There an automobile is coming directly toward us. We try to halt it and fire is opened from it. The ministers and the guards fall to the ground. Shots are fired in reply. From



the opposite end of the bridge shooting begins also. Evidently the Red Guard is joining in the battle. I run to the automobile and yell at them. "It is ours, ours." The sailors swear and finally the matter is settled. It is all our own people. The poor chauffeur almost got a beating. We reach the Peter and Paul Fortress. Here at the gate is an automobile with the five missing ministers and the guards which brought them. The entire government is present except Kerensky. They are taken to the Fortress Soldiers Club. They begin to breathe easier and feel themselves safe and their faces assume individual coloring. They are all well except Tereschenko who has a bump. I make a protocol. Nikitin gives me some papers received from the Ukrainian Rada and says that now we will have to disentangle them. "We will," I say with assurance. The ministers are sent to the cells and I leave for Smolny to make a report.

The narrative of Kamenev sets forth the political moves that occurred before and during the fighting:

The principal part in this work belongs, of course, to Comrade Lenin. Even during the Democratic Conference Lenin considered that the time was ripe for the transfer of authority to the Soviets. As he was compelled to live underground, he demanded from the Central Committee of our party decisive steps for the organization of the rebellion and the overthrow of the Kerensky government. Still more insistent became his demand during the few weeks subsequent to the Democratic Conference. It was finally decided to call a party conference, together with comrades from Moscow, for deciding the question of rebellion. There were two such conferences,—one at Comrade Kalinin's in Liesnoye, and the other in the apartment which was provided by Comrade Sukharova. To both meetings Lenin was obliged to come disguised with a

wig, in order not to be caught by Kerensky's spies. At each meeting there were from fifteen to twenty persons, who were later the principal authors of the November overturn. All these were members of the Central Committee of the party and leaders of the Petrograd and Moscow Soviets. At these meetings Lenin's insistence on the necessity of giving battle to Kerensky's government finally prevailed and the "five" were elected who were intrusted with the political leadership of the struggle. These were Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, Dzerzhinsky, and myself. Conferences of the "five" used to take place in various apartments of workmen on the Viborg side. In Smolny at that time was already acting and directing operations the Military-Revolutionary Committee, round which Comrade Trotsky grouped the forces of the Petrograd garrison. Only on the night of November 5th did events assume such a decisive character that it was possible to concentrate in Smolny itself all activity in organizing the Revolution. During that night Comrade Lenin appeared in Smolny for the first time since July, but only a small group of members of the Military-Revolutionary Committee and of the Central Committee of the party knew of it in advance.

In order to indicate the degree of strain of our work I will mention the following fact: During one of the nights there remained on duty in Smolny Trotsky, I and either Sverdlov or Uritsky, both of them the most active members of the committee. This was the night when cadets called out by Kerensky were to come from Peterhof and Oranienbaum. Trotsky did not leave the telephone for a minute, giving orders to our commissaries on the railways. While sitting at a table we saw Trotsky suddenly turn pale, gasp for air, and fall from his chair to the floor. When we brought him to we found that his weakness was explained by the fact that for two days he had not had time to eat anything.

During the day when the Congress of Soviets was to open

there were desperate clashes on the streets between our troops and Kerensky's defenders. To us it was absolutely clear that not only the working population of Petrograd was with us but also the entire Petrograd garrison. It became clear also that the overwhelming majority of the Soviet delegates which have already arrived were with us. It was necessary therefore to begin the practical organization of new authority.

At the time when the Military-Revolutionary Committee, under the leadership of Comrades Sverdlov, Uritsky, Joffe, Dzerzhinsky, and others were meeting on the third floor of Smolny and directing the seizure of all vital places, and Comrades Antonov, Podvoisky, and Chudnovsky were preparing the capture of the Winter Palace, on a lower floor of Smolny in a small room, Number 36, under the chairmanship of Lenin, was being prepared the first list of People's Commissaries which I made public the following day at the Congress. I remember how Comrade Lenin suggested that the new authority should be called the Workers' and Peasants' Government. Here also were read and discussed the decrees for land and for peace written by Lenin personally. These decrees were accepted almost without debates or correction. It was decided to abolish the old title of Minister and replace it by the title People's Commissary, and the government, I believe at my suggestion, was called "The Council of People's Commissaries." At the same conference was made the first attempt at an agreement with the Left Social-Revolutionaries. They sent a delegation to us, consisting of Kamkov, Karielin, and I think Kolegaev, which inquired of us what we intended to do. We told them that for us the problem is solved, that we are transferring authority to the Congress of Soviets and are ready to make up a government from the members of our party, but that we are ready to give them a few places in the government if they will follow us without any reservations. They declined, saying that it will create a

split in their party which they hoped to bring to accept the slogan of "All power to the Soviets." However we very soon refuted this naïve delusion. After these negotiations we went to open the Congress of which I was made chairman. It met at the time when a struggle was being carried on around the Winter Palace. A few minutes were required for the reading of the declaration of the Right Social-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks regarding their leaving the Congress, and then the floor was given to Comrade Lenin, who read the decrees about peace and land, which were adopted almost unanimously. The authority passed to the Soviets. The first government of workers and peasants was born. The Proletarian Revolution was victorious.

It is strange that the Provisional Government did not take alarm at a conspiracy hatched almost in the open. When the British Ambassador Buchanan inquired of Kerensky whether or not he was aware of the military preparations of the Bolsheviks, the premier replied that the Provisional Government had on its side force enough to overcome any rising should it take place, Colonel Pokolnikov, Commander of the District, was so naïve as to issue an order to his troops forbidding them to yield to the appeals for revolt. On Sunday November 4th the Bolsheviks were supposed to be going "to do something"—nobody knew quite what! On November 5th ministers lunching with the British Ambassador laughed at the rumors of an uprising.<sup>1</sup> The next day before the Council of the Republic Kerensky detailed the state of affairs and set forth the measures he intended to take. After describing the seditious appeals and proclamations he added:

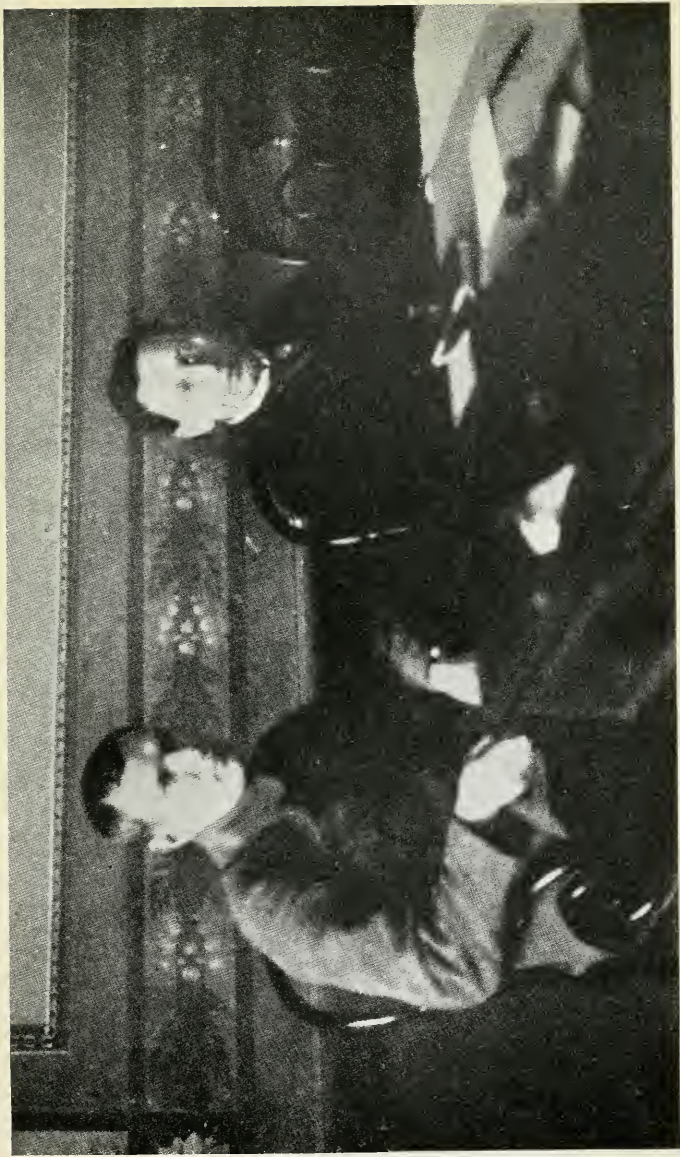
<sup>1</sup> Muriel Buchanan, *The City of Trouble*, p. 174.

Two days ago an order was issued to the troops not to execute the orders of the military authorities unless these are countersigned by the commissaries sent to the regiments by the Petersburg Revolutionary Staff. The military authorities found this act not only unlawful but clearly criminal, and demanded that the order be revoked forthwith and that it should be recognized that nobody but the local authorities can dispose of the troops. The C. E. C. also adopted this point of view. But here also the military authorities, by my order, although there were present all reasons for taking immediate, decisive and energetic measures, found it expedient to first give them an opportunity to rectify their mistake. Besides, there were no actual consequences of this order during the first days after its issuance.

Despite several attempts to prevent the open rebellion which threatens the population and the country with grave consequences, despite the appeals and propositions from various public organizations, despite the imposing declaration of yesterday by the delegates from the front,—the Government did not receive in time a declaration repudiating the orders that were issued. Only at two o'clock in the morning did we receive a statement that in principle all the clauses presented in the ultimatum from the military authorities were accepted. At three o'clock the organizers of the rebellion were compelled to state formally that they had committed an illegal act, which they now repudiate.

But as I expected and was certain from the former behavior of these people, this was another dilatory subterfuge. [A voice from the Right: "You have learned at last."] At the present moment all the time limits have expired and we have not the statement which should have been made in the regiments. On the contrary, we are confronted with the opposite,—a lawless issue of cartridges and arms as well as the ordering of two companies for the aid of the Revo-





M. Uritsky  
(on the right)

President of the Extraordinary Committee to oppose Counter Revolution. (Killed by Counter Revolutionists in 1918)





A detachment of Red Guard Sailors who dissolved the Constituent Assembly

lutionary Staff. In such manner I establish before the Provisional Council the complete, clear, definite attitude of rebellion of a part of the population of Petrograd.

I have suggested that the necessary action in courts be immediately begun. [Noise from the Left.] It was also suggested that the necessary arrests be made. [Noise from the Left prevents Kerensky from speaking.] But listen: at the present time when the state is perishing because of a conscious or unconscious treachery, the Provisional Government, I included, prefer to be killed; but we will not betray the life, the honor, and the independence of the State. [All except the extreme Left rise in their seats and applaud noisily. Adzhemov cries out: "Take a photograph of these sitting down," pointing to the extreme Left. Noise from the Left. Chairman restores order.]

The Provisional Government may be reproached with weakness and excessive patience, but at any rate no one has the right to say that the Provisional Government during the entire time that I have been at the head of it has had recourse to any measures of coercion before immediate danger threatened the State. . . .

At this point Konovalov handed Kerensky a note. After reading it Kerensky said:

I have just received a copy of a document which is now being sent to all regiments: "The Petrograd Soviet is in danger. I herewith order to bring the regiment in complete fighting readiness and to await further instructions. Any delay and non-execution of the order will be considered treason to the revolution. Chairman Military Revolutionary Committee." ["Traitors!" cry voices from the Right.]

Therefore in the capital at the present time exists a condition which in the language of legal authority and law is called a state of rebellion. In reality this is an attempt to raise the rabble against the existing order, to

tear down the Constituent Assembly, and to open the front to the iron fist of Wilhelm. [Voice in the Center: "Correct." On the Left, noises and cries: "Enough."] I fully realize what I am saying: the *rabble*, because the entire "conscious" democracy, the Central Executive Committee, all army organizations and everything of which Russia is proud and should be proud, the reason, the conscience and the honor of the great Russian democracy, are protesting against this. [Stormy applause of all except the extreme Right.]

He ended his speech with the words:

From this platform I am authorized to say: The Provisional Government because of a definite view regarding the present state of affairs considered it to be one of its principal duties not to bring on any sharp or determined encounters before the meeting of the Constituent Assembly. But at the present time the Provisional Government declares: those elements of Russian society who dare to raise their hands against the free will of the Russian people, threatening at the same time to open the front to Germany, must be immediately and finally disposed of. [Stormy applause from the Right, the Center, and a part of the Left. Laughter on the extreme Left.] Let the population of Petrograd know that it will meet a determined authority, and perhaps at the last minute, reason, conscience and honor will be victorious within the hearts of those people who still have hearts. I request you in the name of the country, yes, I demand, that to-day, at this very meeting, the Provisional Government should receive a reply from you that it can do its duty with the assurance of the support of this high assemblage. [Stormy applause on the Right and in the Center, which becomes an ovation.]

Even in this crisis the Council of the Republic split into a Right and Left; competing motions

opened the flood-gates of debate and while the speaking went on army trucks went thundering about the city and firing began in the streets.

The next day a crowd of sailors forced their way into the Marie Palace and one of them stepped up to President Avksentiev, "Stop talking," he said. "Go home. There is no Council of the Republic."

It was indeed so.

Four days after the fall of the Winter Palace some cowardly bourgeoisie attempted a counter-stroke by setting on the cadets of the military and engineering schools, many of whom had been released on parole when the palace was taken. Two officers visited the military school, declared that Kerensky was about to enter Petrograd with two regiments and, producing a stolen Bolshevik seal and forged passes, ordered them to take and hold the War Hotel and the telephone exchange. The cadets obeyed and nothing but the determination of Antonov saved them from massacre when, after an all-day siege, the Red Guards retook the buildings.

The military school from which the raid was engineered replied with bullets when summoned to surrender. Armored cars and artillery were brought up and the cadets were given ten minutes to yield. As they renewed fire from the windows, the walls were breached by cannonade and the building taken by storm. A number of the poor lads lost their lives, some of them being cruelly killed by the exasperated sailors.

On November 12th word came that Kerensky with fifteen hundred Cossacks under General Krasnov was approaching. The Soviets of Tsarkoe Selo,

Krasnoye Selo and Gatchina tried talk and fraternization, which had wrought such wonders in stopping Kornilov, but without success. The Cossacks kept coming on. Lacking encouragement from their officers the garrisons of these towns showed no fight, while the Petrograd garrison was aghast at the prospect of having actually to face fire. Accordingly the Bolshevik leaders appealed directly to the working class not to allow the new régime to be overthrown. The workers responded with alacrity. Thousands moved out toward the coming troops and dug trenches, while the workers in the factories provided guns and munitions. Meeting with fierce artillery fire the Cossacks fell back in dismay, for they had been assured that they would meet with no serious resistance. The next day from scouts sent to the capital they learned how strong were its forces of defense and how rash it would be to try to take Petrograd with a few hundred Cossacks. Krasnov withdrew to Gatchina, and when the Red Guard reached there the next day he and his staff were virtually prisoners of their own men. Kerensky escaped.

In Moscow the fighting was far more prolonged and sanguinary. For seven days there was almost continuous firing. Shells crashing into the upper rooms sent the guests of the Metropole and the National hotels to the cellars for safety, the streets near the heart of the city were swept with the fire of rifles and machine guns and some of the beautiful churches of the Kremlin suffered. A few days later I was moved at seeing bands of pious women gazing with wet eyes at the rents made by shells.



On the one side fought cadets and officers; on the other side factory workers and perhaps five thousand of the Moscow garrison, which, as a whole, had agreed to remain neutral. The Whites looked for help from the front, but when it became clear that the front was against Kerensky they gave in to the Soviet. Perhaps seven or eight hundred people lost their lives, mostly workers, for they were the attackers and were, moreover, men without experience in warfare. Like a long rolling peal of thunder the news of these tremendous events reverberated through Russia. Everywhere the local Soviet rose against the Kerensky commissaries and the city duma and took over governmental authority. In no case did the propertied seize rifles and fight for their cause as the workers did. They had no such will-to-power.

The bourgeoisie were utterly stunned by the proletarian *coup d'etat*. They could not imagine Russia governed by its hand-workers. They were sure that without their direction society would sink into chaos. They cherished the faith that in some mysterious way things would right themselves, that brains and education were bound somehow to come on top. One morning about a fortnight after the overturn I interviewed five important men of affairs in Rostov-on-the-Don. Each assured me that *in two weeks* the bourgeoisie would be again in the saddle. I came up to Moscow and there no one gave "this rabble" a longer shrift than *three weeks*. Three years and five months have passed and there they are!



## CHAPTER XXVI

### THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

**D**ESPISING the tatterdemalion proletariat and assured that within a few days their leaders would be thrust back into the obscurity whence they had emerged, the thousands of officials and employees in the ministries went on "Italian strike." When the People's Commissaries presented themselves at the government offices, they found locked doors or else were met by officials who refused even to speak to them. Bureaus would be locked up before their faces and the keys carried away. There was no getting hold of books or funds. The telephone exchanges refused to connect the commissaries. The telegraph offices would mutilate or delay their messages. Translators, stenographers, and copyists were not to be had. For some weeks most of the governmental machinery was at a standstill, seeing that men competent to do the work of these employees were few in the ranks of the Bolsheviki,

Nevertheless, means were found to make the wheels turn. On the second day after the November revolution Trotsky, Commissary for Foreign Affairs, presented himself at the Foreign Office. The employees were on strike, the offices were empty, so he went home. A week later a notice was posted to the effect that employees occupying quarters owned by the State would be evicted if they did not

report for duty. Summoned to present themselves to Trotsky, the higher officials came to the ministry and delivered up the keys to the cabinets, declaring that they did so under coercion. As the strike continued, on November 26th Trotsky dismissed without pension privileges the assistant ministers and thirty-one other officials. Thereupon most of the functionaries returned without fuss or scandal and resumed their work.

The *saboteurs* were similarly attacked in other quarters. The Commissary of Posts and Telegraphs issued the order, "All the employees and officials who do not recognize the authority of the Council of People's Commissaries and my authority as director of the department are dismissed from their positions without pension privileges."

Many State employees, however, braved even this threat, for the bourgeoisie who were paying their salaries told them that the new régime might tumble at any moment. It was in order to cut off the stream of funds supporting this strike that restrictions were imposed on the amount of money which depositors might draw from the banks or the safety-deposit vaults. One was limited to 150 rubles a week. The strike ended when the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly showed the stability of the new régime, but by this time the places of many of the strikers had been filled and numbers of officials found themselves obliged to accept any work the Bolsheviks would offer them or else take up physical labor. Thus the endeavor to *sabotage* the new government was a complete failure.

It was the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets,

convened on the very day the Winter Palace was attacked, that laid the foundations of the Soviet system. The executive power—as well as a limited legislative power—was vested in a Council of People's Commissaries, corresponding to our Cabinet or ministry. A Central Executive Committee of two hundred and fifty persons selected by the Congress of Soviets and the Peasants' Congress constituted a kind of parliament. The decree creating the council named Lenin as its president and Trotsky as Commissary of Foreign Affairs.

It was essential to win over the peasants to the new order, so the congress promptly gave the force of law to the land acts which had been worked out by the June Congress of Peasants. All the landed estates with their movable and immovable property were nationalized excepting the small holdings of peasants and Cossacks. Their administration was left to district land committees or district soviets. The right to use the land was granted to all citizens of either sex capable of cultivating it by personal or family labor. The amount of land to be assigned to an individual depended on the needs and conditions of the community. Such land could not be sold, leased, or mortgaged for it was public property, but a limited right of transmission was recognized in the phrase, "The right of preference for receiving the estate of the retiring members [of the community] belongs to the nearest relative, or to persons indicated by the retiring member." Hired labor was not allowed. If a farmer fell sick and his family could not till his holding, the community was

to look after it for two years. Farmers who from incapacity or old age lost permanently the ability to cultivate their land personally must give up their holding, but they received instead a state pension.

The decree about peace declared that the Government of Workers and Peasants had addressed a proposal to all belligerents to conclude an immediate armistice upon all fronts.

So much for land and peace. The third promise that had carried the Bolsheviks into power, "Workers' control of the factories," was fulfilled by a decree which applied to all industries employing labor and provided for control by committees representing laborers and employers, called "organs of labor control." These committees had access to all the books, accounts, and correspondence of the enterprise and were entitled to supervise production and ascertain the cost price of products. Each employer and employee had the right of appeal to an All-Russian soviet of labor control which should co-ordinate all industries and direct economic life.

Another decree wiped out all divisions of citizens into classes, all class distinctions and privileges and all class organizations and institutions. Ranks were abolished and the one denomination "citizen" was established for all the population of Russia. All the property of the class institutions of the nobility as well as of the merchants' and burgesses' corporations was to be handed over immediately to local authorities.

A fuller examination of the legislation of the Soviet Government as well as a study of the actual

working out of the new social system is reserved for a volume I hope to publish under the title, *The Russian Soviet Republic*.

In the middle of October the Provisional Government fixed November 25th as the day for electing the members of the Constituent Assembly and December 13th as the date of convening this body. Twice the government had postponed these elections, but there is no reason to suspect a sinister intent behind these delays. To create in tens of thousands of districts all over this huge expanse the administrative machinery for compiling registers for *ninety million* adults of both sexes was a vast undertaking, all the greater because so much of the nation's energy was absorbed in the war. Communication and transport were badly disorganized, and it must be borne in mind that the bulk of the rural population live leagues from a railway, for Russia is scarcely a fifth as well supplied with railways as the United States. In view of the shortage of paper and the paralysis creeping over industry, the mere providing of registers and a hundred million sets of electoral stationery was a heavy task. Nevertheless, if it had been possible to convene the Constituent Assembly in August, the peasants would not have chased the nobles from their estates, the army would not have disintegrated in advance of peace negotiations, and there would have been no seizure of governmental power by the working class. In fact, Russian history would probably have pursued a very different course. When the old order fell the poor, ignorant, suffering masses were told that they must wait, for it would take some time to obtain

peace and land in an orderly way. Generally they were willing to be patient a little longer; but it never entered their heads that snow would fly again before the first step had been taken toward realizing their hopes!

Coming only eighteen days after the November revolution the elections of November 25th (and the following days, for in many places the voting was long drawn out) may well have failed to reflect faithfully the will of the people at that time. Proportional representation, of course, involves voting, not for a particular individual, but for a list of candidates drawn up by the Central Committee of the party. As these lists had been drawn up two or three months before, the split of the great Social-Revolutionary party, so favored by the peasants, into pro-Kerensky Right and pro-Lenin Left, did not show itself in these lists. Hence, it may be that the proportion (one ninth) of Left Social Revolutionaries elected to the Constituent Assembly by no means corresponded to the proportion of Social-Revolutionary voters favoring Soviet rule. In a word, the great leftward drift of the masses in the course of recent months may not have been adequately disclosed in the results of the elections.

Petrograd gave 415,587 votes to the Bolsheviks, 245,628 to the Cadets, and 149,644 to the Social Revolutionaries. Moscow gave 363,282 votes to the Bolsheviks, 260,277 to the Cadets, and 61,394 to the Social Revolutionaries. It was among the peasants that the Social Revolutionaries were strong. The Cadets gained only eighteen seats in the Assembly, the Mensheviks only three seats. From his study of



the election statistics, Brailsford has lately declared that "the Bolsheviki polled a clear fifty-five per cent. of all the votes cast in northern and central Russia, including Moscow, Petrograd, and the north-western and west-central armies. They were out-voted in the richer outlying parts of Russia, the Ukraine, the South, the Caucasus and Siberia, where the Social Revolutionaries predominated."

As soon as it became evident that the supporters of the new order were to be in the minority in the Constituent Assembly, the People's Commissaries assumed a hostile attitude toward this "Master of the Russian Land" of which the oppressed had been dreaming for generations. Early in December the newly elected members began to arrive in Petrograd and now all who dreaded the path of violence staked their hopes on the opening of the Assembly. Were it allowed to function as intended, Russia might yet be spared the horrors of social war. All the arrangements for the convocation of the Assembly had been entrusted by the Provisional Government to a special commission. These commissioners were now arrested and Uritzky, a Bolshevik, was appointed "Commissary for the Constituent Assembly." He began by announcing that deputies would not be allowed to sit till he had examined their credentials and issued certificates of authorization. It was furthermore decreed that the Assembly should not meet officially until 400 members—out of 730 in all—were in Petrograd.

On December 11th, Commissary Uritzky sat in his office in the Tauride Palace waiting for deputies to submit their credentials; but none appeared. All

non-Bolshevik deputies had agreed to ignore him and his government. After a preliminary "private" meeting in a committee room, about fifty members came together in the Session Hall of the palace and agreed that they would meet daily until a quorum were present. Meanwhile, in the capital a great demonstration was staged in support of the Assembly. Processions of students, cadets, bank clerks, railway servants, postal and telegraph employees, municipal employees, and a few workmen, as well as deputations from the City Duma, the State Bank, and the ministries, marching under banners and singing revolutionary songs, paused before the Tauride Palace to be addressed by some member of the Assembly.

On the following day when the deputies reached the palace they found it thronged with soldiers and bristling with machine-guns. Many of the troops were Letts and Lithuanians, ignorant of Russian and therefore inaccessible to arguments and appeals. Although all the rooms and halls were guarded, the deputies intimidated the sentries and held another no-quorum meeting in the Session Hall. On December 13th the deputies were informed that within the walls of the building no meetings would be allowed of persons unprovided with Uritzky's certificates. In response to their dignified protest the officer of the guard addressed his soldiers:

"Comrades, there are gathered here impostors who call themselves members of the Constituent Assembly. You are familiar with the order. They are supposed to get certificates. We are going to show them out."

And the deputies fled from the room and along the corridor between close ranks which barred every passage except that leading to the exit. No wonder a peasant graybeard remarked with emotion: "For the people's sake, the Social-Revolutionaries perished in dungeons and languished in the wastes of Siberia, dreaming of the day when an authoritative Constituent Assembly would meet; and now that it is here, our children, soldiers and sailors, seize us by the arms and drag us out of it by force."

It was not until January 18th that the four hundred and fifty members who meanwhile had gathered in Petrograd were allowed to meet.

Two days before, the C. E. C. had warned that, since all power in the Russian Republic belongs to the Soviets and Soviet institutions, any attempt from any quarter to appropriate any functions of State authority would be considered a counter-revolutionary action and suppressed by all means at the disposal of the Soviet authorities including armed force. The effrontery of calling "counter-revolutionaries" those fellow-Socialists who stood for a free and sovereign Constituent Assembly such as all had shouted for—Bolsheviks louder even than the rest up to a few weeks before—is monumental.

On the day of meeting a popular demonstration of sympathy was attempted under the banners "All Power to the Constituent Assembly," "Long Live the Master of the Russian Land." In endeavoring to approach the Tauride Palace, the paraders were resisted by Red Guards and sailors and a hand-to-hand fight ensued in which twelve were killed.

The gathering deputies were astonished to find two

thousand Red Guards and sailors not only occupying the building and grounds of the palace but present in the Session Hall itself. Sverdlov, chairman of the C. E. C. of the All-Russian Soviet, opened the Assembly with a statement of what the Soviet Government had done and proposed that the Assembly ratify this legislation and endorse the Soviet system. The Right Social Revolutionaries put up Tchernov for president, the Bolsheviks and Left S. R.'s nominated Maria Spiridonova. Both sides were courting peasant support. Tchernov was elected by 244 votes to 153, 6 abstaining. It therefore appeared that the Bolshevik *coup d'etat* had the approval of about 38 per cent. of those present. Its opponents were all Social Revolutionaries, for no Cadet or Menshevik dared show his face.

In his presidential address Tchernov hoped that the Assembly would make an effort to secure a real, democratic, and general peace by calling an International Socialist Conference, for the present peace overtures had not met with a sympathetic response. He concluded with the emphatic statement that the Constituent Assembly is the sovereign authority in Russia.

The debate which followed made clear that both majority and minority favored immediate peace, and the nationalization of the land without compensation to owners. Only two issues held them apart. The Bolsheviks stood for the control of factories by the workers and their eventual socialization, while their opponents deemed Russia unready for a plunge into collectivism. The Bolsheviks saw in the Russian revolution a means of bringing about social overturn

throughout the world, while the S. R.'s were absorbed in the fate of Russia herself.

When the Assembly voted to consider war and peace first instead of defining its attitude toward the Soviets, the Bolshevik members bolted, declaring that in refusing to recognize the Government of the People's Commissaries the Constituent Assembly had thrown down the gauntlet to all laboring Russia. Soon after, the Left S. R.'s. followed them, and at five o'clock in the morning, under threats of violence from the soldiers and sailors present, the Assembly adjourned never to meet again. The next day appeared a decree which said:

The old bourgeois parliamentarism is effete and incompatible with the aim of realizing Socialism. It is not general, national institutions but only class institutions, such as the Soviets, which can overcome the resistance of the propertied classes and lay the foundations of socialistic society. The remnant of the Constituent Assembly left after the withdrawal of the Bolsheviks can only serve as a cloak for the attempts of bourgeois counter-revolutionaries to overthrow the power of the Soviets. Therefore the Central Executive Committee has resolved that the Constituent Assembly be dissolved.

Five days later, before the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets, Lenin said:

To conceive Socialism as a thing that Messrs. Socialists in a ready-made gown will present on a plate will not do. Not a single question of class struggle has ever yet been solved through other means than force. . . . We are not disturbed in the least by the moans of people who, consciously or unconsciously, are on the side of the bourgeoisie, and so



frightened by it, so oppressed by its rule that, looking now at this unprecedented class struggle, they become confused, burst into tears, forgetting all their promises and demanding from us the impossible—that we Socialists should without struggle against exploiters, without breaking their resistance, attain full victory.

Utterly unfair are these insinuations that the Constituent Assembly would have shown itself class-bound. For the property rights of the landed gentry it evinced no more tenderness than the Bolsheviks themselves. Its treatment toward industrial capitalists would have been dictated by notions of public policy rather than sympathy with the propertied. The devotion to the interests of the toiling masses of the Social Revolutionaries who withstood the Bolsheviks was beyond question. It was still too early for politicians or careerists to have crept among them. Probably every one of these S. R. deputies had stood up for the people under the régime that persecuted the friends of the people. Probably no constitution-making body ever met which contained more heroic stuff. Had it not been brutally violated, there is every reason to believe that Russia would soon have made wonderful strides in democracy and popular well-being. Wanting this sovereign moral authority, Russia became the battleground of international socialists who cared more to bring on world revolution than to benefit her common people, and international capitalists who cared more to vindicate the property rights of the bourgeoisie than to benefit her common people.

The behavior of the Russian proletariat toward the Constituent Assembly, that open door to freedom



and justice, is like that of a man who for years has been shut up in a dungeon. Having obtained possession of explosives, he patiently drills holes in one of the blocks of stone that stand between him and liberty and packs them with dynamite in the hope of blowing a hole in the wall. Suddenly the earth quakes and lo, the door of his dungeon stands ajar! Gazing at it with dull uncomprehending eyes, he completes his tamping, sets off the dynamite charge and, wounded and half dead from the blast, he drags himself through the breach in the wall to freedom.

But he might have stepped forth unscathed through the open door!

THE END



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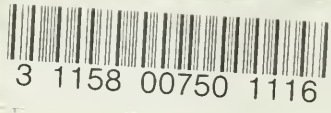
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